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Researching Intimacy in Family Life: A Mixed Methods Study of Emotional Closeness of Grandparent-Grandchild Relationships in Scotland

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PhD in SOCIOLOGY
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Declaration of own work

I declare that this doctoral thesis is entirely my own work and has not been submitted for any other degree or qualification

Signature

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Abstract

This thesis aims to investigate how, and under what circumstances, intimacy in grandparent-grandchild relationships is enabled, enacted and sustained in the early years of grandchildren. Previous work on emotional closeness of grandparent-grandchild relationships suggests that grandmothers and maternal grandparents are more likely to feel stronger bonds with their grandchildren, and that grandparents with a good quality of relationship with parents and living geographically close to grandchildren have greater opportunities to develop a strong emotional tie. The majority of previous research involves data on perceptions of closeness of grandparents focusing on one of their grandchildren or by young adult grandchildren reporting on closeness with a specific grandparent. In addition, qualitative research with grandparents indicates the diversity of ways they exercise agency, and involvement in the life of grandchildren, as well as gendered changes in grandfatherhood. However, there has been limited scholarly attention given to practices of intimacy, emotions and masculinities in grandparent-grandchild relationships, and the ways grandparents interpret and negotiate intimate relationships with their grandchildren amid changes in individual, familial and relational aspects over time. This study uses quantitative data to examine the extent to which individual, family and socio-structural factors influence the mothers' perception of emotional closeness of the relationship of an infant child with four types of grandparents. This is supplemented by qualitative data on grandparents' views of closeness with all their grandchildren. There is a limited scholarly literature on the relation of grandparents' lived experiences, and shared normative understandings, and a sense of being close and special to their grandchildren. The 'practices of intimacy' approach highlights the significance of practices of everyday life enacted by individuals in relation to others in building the quality of being close, and the processes through which individuals attach meaning to such practices. This approach is adopted to understand the diversity of ways grandparents interpret and *do* intimacy with their grandchildren.

The thesis aims were achieved through a mixed methods research process combining secondary data analysis of the Growing Up in Scotland (GUS) study and in-depth interviews with 24 cases of grandparents (12 solo, either with a grandmother or

grandfather, and 12 with couple). GUS maps the emotional closeness of grandchild-grandparent relationships through the grandchild's mother's perception. Analysis revealed that perceived emotional closeness was more likely if the grandparent had social contact with the mother, lived geographically close, and looked after and engaged in outings more regularly with the infant child. In general, social contact and propinquity impacted less on grandmothers, particularly maternal grandmothers, and more on paternal grandfathers. Also, looking after grandchildren on a regular basis was distinctly salient for grandmothers, whereas going more frequently on outings was more salient for grandfathers than grandmothers. As regards practices of intimacy, grandparents emphasised the importance of communication through verbal, bodily and relational forms enacted through a large variety of activities in the daily living related to forms of caring, playing and spending time together, which construct a sense of emotional closeness. The study suggests that intimate grandparent-grandchild relationships are intersected by moral understandings of 'good grandparenting', which are challenged or find contradictions in lived experiences of grandparenting that produce asymmetrical emotionalities among grandchildren, and ambivalences in relation to children and grandchildren. The study suggests that grandparents reflect on their emotionality, and enact embodied emotions, depending on relational and family circumstances, and throughout changes in the relationship with their grandchildren as they get older. The study shows that grandfathers engage in emotional forms of caring, which may challenge hegemonic masculinities, and that the relation between masculinities and practices of intimacy are troubled, particularly in the event of parental divorce.

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List of abbreviations

GUS	Growing Up in Scotland
BC1	Birth Cohort 1 of the Growing Up in Scotland study
ScotCen	Scottish Centre for Social Research
OR	Odds Ratios
CI	Confidence Intervals

Introduction

The increasing interest in grandparenting signals far-reaching demographic, social and economic shifts over the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Amid these changes the involvement of grandparents in the life of family members has attracted considerable attention largely across and within national contexts in Europe and North America (e.g. Glaser et al., 2013a, Mahne and Huxhold, 2012, Gray, 2005, Silverstein and Marengo, 2001, Hoff, 2007). The extensive body of empirical research literature on grandparenting has shown the growing prevalence and significance of grandparents in family life, particularly in the nature and extent of support or help they transfer to their children and grandchildren. While much of the literature corroborates differences and changes over time in the nature and extent of the involvement of grandparents with their adult children and grandchildren, there is a relative shortage of research and understanding of the extent of, and processes through which intimacy is enabled, enacted and sustained between grandparents and grandchildren.

Broad demographic transformations are often cited as relevant factors for the emergence of new opportunities for the enactment and sustainment of family relationships and in the transformations in the nature and quality of bonds between grandparents and grandchildren (Swartz, 2009). It is plausible to think that nowadays most grandchildren will meet their grandparents and will share not only infancy together but also a substantial part of their adulthood (Hagestad, 2006). Thus, the considerable gains in life expectancy in later life have played a key role in extending opportunities to build and sustain a close and stable relationship between grandparents and their grandchildren (Uhlenberg and Kirby, 1998, Wheelock and Jones, 2002). However, many authors indicate differences in the nature and extent of grandparents' participation in family life based on individual, family and socio-structural circumstances. As such, aspects of age, gender, generation, quality of parent-child ties, frequency of contact and geographical distance are factors that shape grandparent-grandchild relationships. The question, however, is the extent to which these aspects significantly shape intimate family life.

Furthermore, changes in family formation and dissolution, particularly the growth in marital breakdown, have been pointed out as having considerable effects on the whole

family life, leading to readjustments and negotiations of new roles and patterns of relationships between parents, children, children-in-law, grandparents and friends. The structure of possibilities for grandparents to access and interact with their grandchildren is affected by a shifts in the parental family structure as a result of separation or divorce, and the grandparents' role in single-parent families can experience a substantial transformation as family demands for support and care are redefined (Gladstone, 1988, Bridges et al., 2007, Ferguson et al., 2004). In addition, lifecourse events such as marital or couple breakdown emphasises relational aspects structured around gender and lineage in shaping intimate relationships between grandparents and grandchildren.

Nonetheless, much of the empirical research literature on affective ties or closeness between grandparents and grandchildren has either understood it as an explanatory variable of intergenerational contact or child's emotional adjustment (Lussier et al., 2002) or based on small samples, largely in the U.S., without a theoretical framework (Kennedy, 1992a, King, 2003a) or contemplated the intergenerational solidarity model in explaining one particular grandparent-grandchild dyad (Silverstein and Marengo, 2001). There is a research gap in the study of closeness in intergenerational family relationships between grandparents and grandchildren in their early years, as well as the effects of practices of everyday life such as looking after and going on outings on enacting a sense of closeness between grandparents and grandchildren.

The study of how, why and to what extent, and under what circumstances, grandparents and grandchildren enable, enact and sustain a special quality of the relationship constituted by intimacy and emotional closeness is a step towards demystifying assumptions of altruism, solidarity and positive sentiments of grandparents towards their grandchildren as intrinsically constitutive of grandparenthood (Connidis, 2010, Brussoni and Boon, 1998a). This thesis challenges the notion of intergenerational family relationships as the product of an inner or biological aspect of family relationships. It also challenges ideas about the link between intergenerational solidarity and positive feelings. The intergenerational solidarity relationships between different generations of the family might not be of equilibrium, but of contradiction and conflict (Connidis, 2015). Positive feelings can be coexistent with negative ones, and expectations, norms, personal preferences and

behaviours are likely to struggle to fit or be perfectly aligned with one another. This resonates with studies that found that grandparenting is often imbued with ambivalent situations between norms, and between norms and preferences (Mason et al., 2007). Importantly, social norms and lived experiences of grandparenting suggest that families still occupy a central place in the social life of people, and push against tenets of the individualisation thesis signalling a demise of family obligations and responsibilities.

Families and intimate relationships have been the focus of research in contemporary debates about the wider social, economic and cultural transformations in reflexive modern societies. The processes of individualisation and democratisation in social life point to profound changes in the intimate relationships between individuals characterised by choice and agency, but also uncertainty and risk. This is an important shift veering the attention towards a conceptual and methodological subject of enquiry of people's social lives and the ways they relate to each other, particularly the delicate presence and prevalence of traditional family norms and obligations as structuring principles of individuals' social lives. These debates are vital in understanding the intimate relationships between grandparents and grandchildren. Nonetheless, this study finds conceptual and methodological ground in feminist critiques of the individualization and democratisation thesis and the 'relational turn' in enquiring social life (Roseneil and Ketokivi, 2016). This study is concerned with the relational processes through which grandparents work at constructing and maintaining intimate relationships with their grandchildren through everyday 'practices of intimacy' (Jamieson, 2005) to explore and situate grandparents' processes of enacting and maintaining significant and meaningful intimate relationships with their grandchildren. In order to outline relational accounts of personal relationships within the family, an integral part of the analysis must be the understanding of the different ways through which grandparents work at *doing* intimacy. This is to enquire about cognitive and embodied forms of intimacy in personal instances of everyday family practices. Importantly, grandparent-grandchild intimate relationships cannot obviate structures of age, gender and generation in shaping intergenerational grandparent-grandchild and the ways practices of intimacy are enacted in everyday life.

Researching intimate practices between grandparents and their grandchildren takes interest in the lived experiences of grandparents, and the meanings and significance attached to these experiences within broader relational processes of family, gender, age and generation.

Research Aims and Questions

Two aims have guided this research. First, this research aims to describe, explore, explain and understand patterns of intimate relationships between grandchildren in the early years and their grandparents, as well as grandparents' experiences of intimacy with their grandchildren over the life course, and to explain the ways through which grandparents afford *meaning* to everyday practices that contribute to enact, enable and maintain a close and intimate bond with their grandchildren.

This study employs a 'sequential mixed methods' approach to collecting and analysing data of families living in Scotland. It draws on the Growing Up in Scotland study, a national longitudinal survey following the life of children in Scotland. A purpose-built sample of families has sequentially followed and been used to carry out interviews with one or more grandparents of the GUS study child. This study will focus on the structural and individual factors enhancing and enabling emotional closeness, as well as the meanings and significance grandparents attach to these relationships and how they make sense of them across the intersecting life course of them as grandparents and their grandchildren. This study will focus on the life of several grandparents of diverse ages within and across families in relation to one particular grandchild in each of these families. The novelty of the study that will hopefully help in distinguishing it from the previous empirical studies on intergenerational relationships lies on the emphasis on intersecting family life of grandparents within the same family and individual and family events. Although the major contribution to research will likely come from the crossover of these results with the information of the meanings, significance of actions and attitudes of the grandparents themselves.

The research questions for the first research aim were as follows:

RQ1: Does the structure of family needs and opportunities for intergenerational solidarity explain mothers' perception of closeness between grandchildren in their early years and their grandparents? Does close living proximity of grandchildren and one set of grandparents (either maternal or paternal lineage), and contact between mothers and these grandparents, influence reported closeness with the grandparents of the opposite lineage?

RQ2: Is there an association between parental divorce or separation and the mothers' perception of emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents? Does divorce/separation of grandparents explain variations in the mothers' perception of emotional closeness of children and their grandparents? Is there a double (dis)advantage on intergenerational closeness in families with both divorced parents and grandparents?

RQ3: Is there an association between the nature and frequency of practices of everyday life, of grandchildren with their grandparents, and emotional closeness between grandchildren and their maternal and paternal grandmothers and grandfathers? Is there a change in the estimated strength of the association of emotional closeness with activities of daily living when controlling for parental and grandparental divorce?

The research questions for the second aim of this study were as follows:

RQ4: How do grandparents perceive and make sense of an intimate relationship with their grandchild(ren)? Do grandparents have the same emotional attachment and closeness to all their grandchildren?

RQ5: What are the significant and meaningful 'practices of intimacy' grandparents do with their grandchildren? Are there any differences between gender and lineage of grandparents?

RQ6: Do grandparents feel changes in the closeness of the relationship with their grandchildren over time? What are the main reasons for these changes? And how do they affect the ways grandparents feel a sense of a close connection towards their grandchildren?

Thesis outline

In chapter 1 I review the previous research on grandparenthood that has examined a series of factors that shape intergenerational contact and closeness between grandparents and grandchildren, including the effects of parental and grandparental divorce on the relationship between these two generational groups in a family. In chapter 2 I situate the current research in contemporary debates of family and intergenerational relationships. In chapter 3 I introduce the debates on transformations of intimacy in family relationships, and examine the conceptualisations of intimacy in family relationships. In chapter 4 I give a detailed description of the methodology used in this research. I justify and describe the use of mixed methods.

Chapters 5-7 correspond to the empirical analysis of the Growing Up in Scotland data on the factors associated with a perceived close relationship between grandchildren and four different types of grandparents, namely, maternal and paternal grandmothers and grandfathers. In chapter 5 I explore the effects of individual, social and structural characteristics of the grandchild's family on emotional closeness between them and their grandparents. Chapter 6 looks at the effects of parental and grandparental divorce on the likelihood of grandchildren's emotional closeness to their grandparents. Chapter 7 addresses the relationship between different practices shared together between grandchildren and grandparents on the chances of feeling emotionally close to one another.

Chapters 8 and 9 discuss the interview data with grandparents to examine lived experiences of grandparents and how they relate to constructing intimate relationships with their grandchildren. In chapter 8 I investigate the reasons given by grandparents about their involvement in the life of their grandchildren, particularly looking at the narratives around intergenerational affective bonds in family relationships, and the ambivalences in balancing cultural understandings of grandparenting social norms and lived experiences. I also examine the processes through which grandparents enact intimacy through cognitive and embodied practices in everyday life. Chapter 9 extends the previous discussion on practices of intimacy by exploring how these practices change over time, and the meanings grandparents attach to these changes in feeling a close and special connection with the grandchild. I also examine the material effects

of lifecourse events such as parental and grandparental divorce or separation on the ways grandparents' relationships with their grandchildren are affected by marital or couple breakdown processes.

Chapter One: Literature Review

Introduction

One of the main aims of this thesis is to explore how emotional closeness between grandparents and grandchildren in the early years is shaped by variations in socio-demographic characteristics of the grandchild's mother and grandparents, intergenerational contact, structural opportunities for interaction, grandparental involvement in family life and lifecourse events. This chapter reviews the relevant literature research on contemporary grandparenting which set the boundaries and informed the research process.

On the basis of the research aims and questions, this chapter reviews the literature on the factors that influence grandparents' involvement in the life of their grandchildren and shape the variability in emotional closeness in grandparent-grandchild relationships. First, I briefly outline the main demographic and socio-economic shifts that have played a crucial part in developing new opportunities for grandparent-grandchild relationships in modern societies. Secondly, I review previous research that has explored how socio-demographic and family characteristics of grandchildren, parents and grandparents, as well as the quality of the grandparent-parent relationship are related with grandparents' involvement in the life of their grandchildren. This sets the range of factors that are closely associated with variations in the ways grandparents participate in family life. This is followed by a review of empirical research with a particular focus on describing the relevant factors associated with a close relationship between grandchildren and grandparents. In the third section I review studies accounting for the effects of divorce or separation in the middle and/or grandparental generation on the type and quality of the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren, and particularly how these effects vary by gender and lineage of grandparents.

This chapter highlights that much of the literature on grandparenthood and emotional closeness is descriptive, that is, most studies make no explicit links between empirical

findings and social theory that provide a social narrative to those. I also highlight differences in methodological and analytical aspects that are worth taking into account in framing this doctoral research such as the diversity of sampling frames, as well as disclosing that there are differences in the perception of closeness contingent upon the research participant.

Trends of grandparenting

Over the last few decades of the twentieth century a prolonged prevalence of grandparents in the life of their grandchildren has become characteristic of families in modern societies. This is a direct consequence of profound transformations in the social and health conditions during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries sparking vast changes in the structure of the population (Wilmoth, 2000). Over these centuries the rates of infant mortality gradually declined, while concomitantly there were steady gains in the life expectancy of individuals aged 60 and over, and more recently extra years of life for the oldest old group (i.e. people aged 80 and over). Shifts in mortality trends of infant and old generations have made possible three and even four generations in a family coexisting for a longer period than any other time in the past (Grundy et al., 2006, Crimmins, 2004). The considerable gains in life expectancy in later life have played a major role in extending opportunities to build and sustain a close and stable relationship between grandparents and their grandchildren (Uhlenberg and Kirby, 1998, Wheelock and Jones, 2002, Uhlenberg, 1996). The prominence and prevalence of grandparents in contemporary societies has been indicated in some recent studies on grandparenthood. For example, Glaser and colleagues (2013b) using the 2004 SHARE dataset found that 58% of men and 67% of women aged 50 and over in England and Wales are grandparents. Similarly, a study using a cohort survey of Scottish children born in 2005/2006 noted that the practical totality of children aged six (99%) had at least one grandparent alive, and most notably 80% of the children of the same age reported three or more living grandparents (Jamieson et al., 2012). Using estimations of life expectancy and first birth in the U.S., Uhlenberg and Kirby (1998) projected that as few as 3% or 4% of grandchildren in the year 2000 would have lost all grandparents at the age of twenty in contrast with 30% of grandchildren with no grandparents in 1900. Thus, it is plausible to think that these days most grandchildren

will meet their grandparents and will share not only infancy together but also a substantial part of their adulthood (Hagestad, 2006). The affluence of grandparents available for kin support at the turn of the twenty-first century has led to potential changes in the ways grandparents are involved in the everyday life of the younger generations of a family, and the nature and quality of these relationships.

However, population structures have not only been transformed by low mortality rates among infants and older individuals, but also as a result of shifts in the timing and quantum of childbearing. In the vast majority of the 'minority' world countries, mostly Europe, Northern America and certain regions in Asia, fertility rates have in the last few decades to a point below the replacement level (Kinsella and Velkoff, 2001, Poston and Bouvier, 2010). While the Total Fertility Rate -TFR- has declined over the last few decades, the age at which childbearing begins has increased, that is, more couples are postponing fertility decisions from early years until late ages of adulthood (Kohler et al., 2002). Changes in the quantum and timing of fertility have added some further diversity in the patterns of family formation and timing of becoming a grandparent, and concomitantly the amount of shared years of co-survivorship of generations within a family. Thus, the composition of families has been affected on two dimensions. First, there are now more generations within a family alive in a single point in time, often referred as the vertical dimension, and, secondly, there has been a shrinkage in the number of members in each generation (i.e. siblings, cousins), referred as the horizontal dimension (Connidis, 2010). This verticalisation of family structures has led to '*beanpole families*' (Uhlenberg, 1996), a situation that for some have played a crucial part in the emergence of new patternings of relationships across vertical and horizontal lines of kinship and family, particularly transforming the nature and quality of bonds between grandparents and grandchildren (Swartz, 2009, Hagestad, 2006), and situating grandparents at the core of family relationships and family life processes.

The shifts in the generational structure are argued to be selective in the transfiguration of the pool of opportunities and resources available for families and between generations attending the lower competing demands between siblings or cousins (Swartz, 2009). Uhlenberg and Kirby (1998) suggest that demographic shifts are responsible for variations in the intergenerational relationships due to the decline in the average number of grandchildren grandparents will have in comparison with the

early twentieth century. This, in turn, would allow grandparents to increase their support for a smaller pool of grandchildren (Cherlin and Furstenberg, 1992). Despite concerns about the impact of family structures on the capacity for families to meet care needs of family members as there are fewer children to look after their parents in later life (Agree and Glaser, 2009), much research signals that most of the transfers in the family occur downwards from older to younger generations, particularly in the form of caring for grandchildren or transferring financial resources to parents (Hoff, 2007, Gray, 2005, Lewis et al., 2008). Bengtson (2001b) affirms that intergenerational family relations are becoming more prevalent in ensuring an adequate support and well-being of family members, and that these relationships have been achieving centrality in the life of American families in the last decades of the twentieth century. The role of grandparents as family “rescuers” was already captured in early studies in the 1950s indicating the supportive role of grandparents in family life by assisting younger generations in the event of a crisis, a notion that emerged again in the 1980s as a result of increased divorce trends (Szinovacz, 1998). Similarly, grandparents have been identified as an important source and resource for providing aid and support to family members, a ‘reserve army’ that can be deployed at times of parents’ needs for childcare (Hagestad, 2006).

The increasing co-survivorship of the youngest and oldest generations has triggered the possibility to increase the exchanges of time and other material and non-material resources from one generation to another (Albertini et al. 2007; Henretta et al. 2002). Research on intergenerational relationships in families in Europe has found significant and consistent downwards transfers of resources from grandparents to their grandchildren in the form of looking after or providing childcare (Igel and Szydlik, 2011, Baydar and Brooks-Gunn, 1998, Gray, 2005), albeit with some differences between countries (e.g. Hank and Buber, 2009, Glaser et al., 2010, Herlofson and Hagestad, 2012). Much of this research points to the complementary role of grandparents in allowing their daughters or daughters-in-law to take a paid job (Dench and Ogg, 2002, Wheelock and Jones, 2002), and effectively becoming the primary caregiver for their grandchildren (Koslowski, 2009). However, these transfers or ‘gift of caring time’ might have economic consequences for grandparents as they choose childcaring over work or as a result of dedicating resources to their grandchildren that

are not compensated by the parental generation (Wheelock and Jones, 2002). Apart from material or practical support of grandparents to parents and grandchildren, some studies have found that grandparents play a crucial role in the psychological adjustment and emotional well-being of grandchildren, particularly in the event of parental separation (Bridges et al., 2007, Ruiz and Silverstein, 2007).

The exchanges of support between family members across generations might respond to different social and economic factors that shape intergenerational relationships. Bengtson and colleagues (2002a) point out that the increasing support across generations is a consequence of a family strategy to adjust to familial and social changes in modern societies. Similarly, Swartz (2009) argues that families are strengthening the bonds across generations as a means to adjust effectively to the uncertainties derived from new economic, social and cultural shifts, such as divorce, that are directly affecting the structure of the family. Nonetheless, she cautiously warns about the observed variations in the adjustments by social class and ethnicity pointing to a variability in these strategies. Thus, the relationship between demographic and social changes in modern societies and the nature and type of the intergenerational family ties is a matter of controversy. The greater availability of grandparents and resources for supporting grandchildren does not concurrently lead to the conclusion that more substantial and enduring ties across generations are being formed. For instance, Bengtson (2002b) signals that conflict within a family precludes solidarity between family members. Others point to unresolved strains arising from ambivalent situations as elements shaping the distinctive involvement of grandparents in the life of their grandchildren (Connidis, 2010, Connidis, 2015, Connidis and McMullin, 2002). The diversity in intergenerational relationships might be affected by social and technological changes as well as social structural relations of gender, generation and lineage that intersect and shape structural and contextual needs and opportunities that affect the pool of resources, attitudes and expectations related to grandparenthood (Silverstein and Marenco, 2001). The enactment of the grandparent role has been found to be complex, multidimensional and fluid rather than homogenous and static across the life course (*Ibid*). The next sections present findings from intergenerational family studies examining a series of factors influencing the nature, extent and quality of the relationship between grandparents and their grandchildren.

Grandparents' prevalence and involvement in the life of grandchildren

Despite the growing prevalence and importance of grandparents in everyday family life, research on grandparenthood has noted some variability and asymmetry among and between grandparents in the extent and type of involvement in their grandchildren's life (Davey et al., 2009, Neugarten and Weinstein, 1964, Hoff, 2007). Crucially, some research on grandparenthood points to complex and dynamic social processes contingent upon individual, familial and socio-structural aspects including age, sex and lineage that impact and shape family life including opportunities for contact and quality of the relationship (Szinovacz, 1998). Also, the nature, extent and quality of the intergenerational bonds is subjected to changes across the lifecourse of individuals, which might be shaped by differing needs, demands, capabilities and preferences of individuals throughout their lifecourse including divorce or separation of the middle or older generations (Silverstein and Marenco, 2001).

Grandparental family involvement by age of family members

Research on grandparenthood about the extent and type of grandparents' involvement in the life of their grandchildren has found significant effects of age of grandparents and grandchildren on shaping the extent of the involvement. Largely, previous research suggests that age of grandparent predicts the childcare provided by grandparents to their grandchildren, with younger grandparents being more likely to provide support compared to their older counterparts (e.g. Silverstein and Marenco, 2001, Geurts et al., 2009). In a similar vein, Glaser's and colleagues' study (2013a) comparing grandparental childcare in fourteen countries in Europe concluded that in any of the studied countries younger grandparents were significantly more likely to look after their grandchildren compared to older grandparents.

Other studies point out that the age of grandparent predicts the level of contact with grandchildren, with younger grandparents having higher frequency of contact with them compared to older ones (Silverstein and Marenco, 2001). However, there are nuances in the effects of age among grandparents. Silverstein's and Long's (1998a) longitudinal study in the US observing patterns of affection, contact and geographical

proximity of grandparents with their adult grandchildren found that older grandparents experience sharper declines in the level of contact with grandchildren over time compared to their younger counterparts regardless of the gender of the grandparent.

The age of the grandchild is considered an important aspect in shaping the opportunities grandparents have to interact with their grandchildren. Previous research has identified some effects of age of grandchild on the type and extent of relationship with their grandparents. Significantly, some scholars highlighted grandchild's age-related differences in the patterns and perceptions of the relationships with their grandparents (Silverstein and Long, 1998a, Ferguson et al., 2004). For instance, an American study by Creasey and Kaliher (1994) with 169 grandchildren in 3rd, 5th and 7th grade found that older grandchildren perceive the relationship with their grandparents as less supportive compared to younger grandchildren and also reported lower levels of personal disclosure, contact and instrumental aid. However, the authors found no significant differences in the affection of grandchildren towards their grandparents by age of the grandchild.

Changes in the level of contact between grandparents and grandchildren also vary by the age of the grandchild, with greater help from grandparents provided to children under the age of five compared to older grandchildren (Gray, 2005). Some other evidence from studies point at significant decreases in contact and practical support from grandparents as grandchildren grow older (Creasey and Kaliher, 1994, Silverstein and Long, 1998a). In a British study, Dench and Ogg (2002) in a study using the British Household Panel found that grandparents have more regular contact with grandchildren in their early ages, and subsequently the frequency of contact declines when grandchildren reach adolescence as grandchildren achieve more autonomy from parents. Similar findings were found in Silverstein's and Marengo's (2001) study in which younger grandchildren were more likely to be looked after on a more regular basis, to share a larger number of activities and interact more often with their grandparents compared to older grandchildren. These findings show that grandparent-grandchild relationships are far from static, and that the involvement of grandparents in the life of their grandchildren is dependent on age opportunities of grandparents and grandchildren.

Conversely, other studies have casted some doubt about the potential effects of age as a strong factor shaping grandparent-grandchild ties. For instance,

Patterns of grandparental involvement by maternal age in the UK were studied by Fergusson and colleagues (2008) using data from the Avon Longitudinal Study of Parents and Children (ALSPAC). Their data showed that grandparental involvement in the life of grandchildren was highest for the youngest group of grandmothers, particularly mothers in their teens. This correlation between maternal age and grandparental involvement in family life is also found in a study by Anderson and colleagues (2007) using data from the first sweep of the Birth Cohort of the Growing Up in Scotland (GUS) survey. The findings indicate that children with younger mothers engaged in a more frequent contact with their grandparents, although children with older mothers were more likely to have regular contact with all of the child's grandparents.

All in all, there is no clear cut answer to whether and how age of grandchildren has a significant effect on the type and extent of the quality of the association and affection between grandparents and grandchildren within families. However, this research has examined the considerations of grandparents' relationships with their grandchildren at various age stages, emphasising the meaning and significance of life course changes in the life of grandchildren, and interpreting these within the dynamics of family life. In brief, the age of grandchildren, parents and grandparents is considered in this thesis because of the varied and changing structures of needs and opportunities of different generations in a family that shape the nature and extent of involvement in each other's life. Moreover, age-related processes such as growing independence of grandchildren from their grandparents or health decline of grandparents are likely to modify the type of activities of daily life shared between grandparents and grandchildren.

Socio-economic characteristics of parents

Several studies have examined the association between socio-demographic characteristics of the child's parents and the nature and extent of the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren (Fergusson et al., 2008, Gray, 2005, Jamieson et al., 2012, Wheelock and Jones, 2002). Much attention has focussed on the more

prevalent support from grandparents to look after and provide childcare to their grandchildren as the increasing involvement of women in formal paid employment has led to new demands and needs for childcare. For example, Alison Koslowski's (2009) review of the literature on the informal childcare provision in West European countries indicates that mothers in paid work are more likely to rely on grandparental childcare, particularly in the child's early years. A recent study, based on data from the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE), found that grandparental childcare support was particularly relevant across different countries in Europe among working mothers with children aged 3 to 5, albeit cross-national differences in the extent and intensity of grandparental support can be attributed to different policy regimes of childcare (Di Gessa et al., 2015). Also, Wheelock's and Jones' (2002) study with 425 parents living in a north East conurbation in England found that much of the informal childcare used by mothers in paid employment was grandparental care, and as much as 52% of the sampled parents rely on regular childcare (once a week or more often) from the child's grandparents. However, Dench and Ogg (2002) using data from the British Household Panel found that, in fact, grandparents providing childcare was more likely among mothers working part-time, given that full-time working mothers were more likely to use formal childcare. The work status of the child's mother is nonetheless an important aspect shaping childcare needs and demands, which affects the opportunities of grandparents to participate in the life of their grandchildren.

Household income has also been found to be associated with the extent and intensity of grandparental childcare provision. Evidence indicates that children living in families with low economic resources, and particularly in households where the mother is working and has a low level of educational qualification, are more likely to be looked after by their grandparents (Gray 2005). This can be explained by the fact that families with scarce economic resources and little availability of time for childcare are more likely to turn to grandparents to seek for support and aid. This is particularly acute in single mother families in which the need for childcare and demands of work trigger greater needs of support for childcare and need of financial help from grandparents (Dench and Ogg, 2002, Wheelock and Jones, 2002). The State provision of childcare and other resources might modulate financial means available to the families, and altogether affect the type and frequency of involvement of grandparents

with their grandchildren (Di Gessa et al., 2015, Daatland et al., 2011, Herlofson and Hagestad, 2012). Thus, parents living in countries where childcare support transfers and services are scarce are more likely to rely on extended family network, especially grandparents, to meet childcare needs.

Finally, with respect to the association between the level of education of mothers and grandparental involvement in family life, evidence suggests that low level of educational qualification is correlated with more intensive grandparental childcare (Gray, 2005). Fergusson and colleagues (2008) also found a similar negative association between maternal education and the likelihood of receiving help with childcare from grandparents. The authors found that grandparental childcare support effect was consistent even considering marital status, maternal age or the use of paid childcare. However, as the authors suggest, geographical mobility of better educated mothers might be higher than mothers with low educational attainment, which would explain differences in the grandparental childcare support by maternal education.

The structure of opportunities of grandparental involvement is also affected by the socio-demographic characteristics of the grandchild's mother. This is important to acknowledge as responsibilities of grandparents towards younger generations in a family are more likely to be acute given the employment status of mothers, the financial resources in the grandchild's household and the mother's level with educational qualification. Notwithstanding these three aspects are often correlated with each other, they are different indicators that capture and constitute the structure of family needs, and point to a greater variability of family contexts.

Gender and lineage of grandparents

Much research on grandparenthood has focussed on the differences between grandmothers and grandfathers in their participation in the life of grandchildren (Spitze and Ward, 1998, Baydar and Brooks-Gunn, 1998, Hank and Buber, 2009). There is evidence from numerous studies that indicate a greater involvement of grandmothers in their grandchildren's life compared to grandfathers (see for a more detailed review Aldous, 1995, Zamarro, 2011, Glaser et al., 2013a). Largely, empirical evidence indicates that grandmothers are more likely to be in regular contact with their grandchildren compared to grandfathers (Zamarro, 2011, Aldous, 1995, Dench and

Ogg, 2002). Equally, grandmothers have been found to provide more extensive informal childcare than grandfathers (Fuller-Thomson and Minkler, 2001, Gray, 2005, Wheelock and Jones, 2002), who are typically engaged in family life through their wife or partner (Dench and Ogg, 2002). Yet, much of this work lacks a solid theoretical engagement explaining the differences in the involvement of grandmothers and grandfathers in the life of their grandchildren.

Typically, gender differences in grandparents' involvement have been explained by referring to the wider social and normative settings in which individuals are ascribed. The contenders of this perspective have suggested a differentiation of gender socialisation of males and females ascribe a caring and supportive role to women, whereas grandfathers typically play a fun role and are involved in family issues through their wife or partner (Dench and Ogg, 2002, Cherlin and Furstenberg, 1992, Eisenberg, 1988). Similarly, some scholars have asserted that matrilineal bias in intergenerational relationships, which assigns a greater practical and emotional weight on daughter-mother relationships, is a result of the 'kin-keeper' role that is often played by women (Eisenberg, 1988). For instance, Chan and Elder (2002) point that matrilineal advantage derives from the role of parents as gatekeepers of the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren. In this approach, the relationship between non-adjacent generations is contingent upon the quality of bonds between the middle and older generations, with particular ascendancy of mother-daughter relationships.

However, gender role differentiation based on the sexual division of labour falls short in capturing the influences of later life experiences and ideologies of gender in shaping social relations between grandparents and grandchildren (Mann et al., 2016). Moreover, much of the research on gender and grandparents' childcare participation yields some mixed and inconclusive results about the differences between grandmothers and grandfathers (Spitze and Ward, 1998) or about the desires between grandparents to have an active involvement through caring and helping grandchildren (Roberto et al., 2001). As pointed out by some scholars, most of the studies on grandparenting have a matrifocal bias that contribute to diminish and overlook the role and experiences of grandfathers in family life (Ferguson et al., 2004, Tarrant, 2012, Mann, 2007, Mann et al., 2016). Thus, there has been scarce analytical interest in

grandparenting research in capturing the ways grandfathers construct a separate sense of grandparenting identity from grandmothers and how they are involved in the life of their grandchildren.

Apart from gender, much research on grandparenting has identified family lineage as a factor mediating the type and extent of grandparents' involvement in the life of their grandchildren (e.g. Jamieson et al., 2012, Lussier et al., 2002). Evidence suggests that maternal grandparents have more regular contact with their grandchildren than paternal grandparents (Jamieson et al., 2012, Eisenberg, 1988), and also that maternal grandparents are more likely to provide financial help or step in in case of a family emergency (Eisenberg, 1988). The effects of lineage in mediating the extent and nature of the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren have been found to be closely associated with the grandparent's gender. Notably, the larger differences in the participation of the grandchild's life are between maternal grandmothers and the other grandparents (Uhlenberg and Hammill, 1998). Maternal grandmothers are generally found to have more regular contact with their grandchildren than any other grandparent (Jamieson et al., 2012), and are consistently identified as the closest grandparent by grandchildren (Boon and Brussoni, 1996, Hodgson, 1992, Kennedy, 1992a).

However, there are circumstances in which matrilineal advantage of grandparents' involvement in the life of their grandchildren finds opposition. For example, differences in the geographical living might also alter relationship patterns by lineage. For example, King and Elder (1995a) found in a study comparing children in farm and nonfarm families that children living in farm families were more likely to have contact with their paternal grandparents compared to nonfarm children. Yet, despite the evidence offered in some studies about the effects of gender and lineage as predictors of the extent and quality of relationship between grandparents and grandchildren, these effects needs to be qualified and refined including individual and structural factors that might mediate in the associations between these aspects and the nature and extent of the grandparent-grandchild relationship.

Geographical proximity

Intergenerational relationships between grandparents and their grandchildren are also mediated by structural opportunities such as geographical proximity between family members. Much research indicates that living in close proximity enhances the likelihood of grandparents to have face-to-face contact with grandchildren (Cherlin and Furstenberg, 1985, Whitbeck et al., 1993, Igel and Szydlik, 2011, Aldous, 1995, Hodgson, 1992). Also, childcare support provided by grandparents to their grandchildren is more regular and more likely to occur when grandparents live in close geographical proximity to their grandchildren (Silverstein and Marengo, 2001, Ho, 2015). Thus, as Uhlenberg and Hammill (1998) concluded, geographical propinquity between generations is a strong predictor of the chances grandparents have to be involved in the life of their grandchildren, although this is not a sufficient reason to guarantee a close relationship.

However, there is certain variability in geographical proximity of family members between families depending on individual characteristics. For example, Lynne Hodgson (1992) found that young adult grandchildren lived closer to their grandparents compared to older grandchildren. Similarly, Silverstein's and Long's (1998b) study found that close geographical proximity of living between grandparents and grandchildren is more likely among younger grandparents, although both young and old grandparents experience increases in geographical distance over time. Despite differences in the geographical proximity between grandparents and grandchildren by age and life course of grandparents and grandchildren, geographical propinquity between generations remains a strong predictor of the involvement and quality of the grandparent-grandchild relationship.

Nonetheless, Jennifer Mason (1999) indicates the existence of ambivalences in the feelings of family members living geographically close; security and warmth of knowing that family members are living close by may be paired with feelings of intrusion or obligation without consent. This is partially reflected in some studies pointing that geographical distance between grandparents and grandchildren have a negative effect on the level of emotional closeness of grandparents with their grandchildren (Creasey and Kaliher, 1994, Thompson, 1999), although others have

pointed to a continuity in the feelings of closeness between these two generations even when grandparents live geographically distant from their grandchildren (Ferguson et al., 2004).

The research evidence on geographical proximity between family members indicates a strong influence on the patternings of intergenerational contact and emotional ties, although research suggests a more complex and dynamic scenario of this factors on grandparental involvement in the life of their grandchildren. Thus, I shall explore the influence of geographical proximity between generations in a family as indicating structural opportunities for interaction, but also relational aspect contingent upon lifecourse events of parents and grandparents, which might shed some light upon continuities and discontinuities in grandparent-grandchild relationships.

Parent-adult child quality of the relationship

With a few exceptions, much research on grandparenthood is based on grandparent-grandchild dyads (e.g. Brussoni and Boon, 1998b), which disregards the importance of the middle generation in shaping intergenerational family relations and explaining within-family variation (Mahne and Huxhold, 2012). One such exception, Hagestad (2006) advocates for the need to study grandparent-grandchildren relationships from a three-generational perspective to take into account the various links between the different generations within a family. Some commentators have argued that these relationships are ‘mediated’ (Gladstone, 1989) or ‘derived’ (Johnson, 1998) by the parents of the child. Similarly, Hodgson’s (1992) and Kivett’s (1991) studies affirm the strong control and importance of parents in regulating the access and quality of relationship between grandparents and grandchildren.

The relationship between grandparents and grandchildren is affected by the wider set of family relationships in which the middle generation play a significant role in the extent and nature of grandparents’ involvement in the life of their grandchildren. For example, Whitbeck and colleagues (1993) using reports from parents and adolescent children found that the frequency of face-to-face contact was associated with the quality of the relationship between parents and grandparents. In the same study they found that the quality of the relationship between the parent-grandparent dyad was a

predictor of the quality of the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren. Similarly, in a study of rural and non-rural families in Iowa King and Elder (1995a) found that the grandparent-grandchild relationship is mediated by the quality of the ties between parents and grandparents. In such cases, the perceived support from older to younger generations was greater among those grandparents with a good relationship with the parent of the child, although this effect was larger for paternal grandparents. Chan and Elder (2000a) using the Iowa Youth and Families Project show that the matrilineal advantage in the frequency of contact between grandparents and their grandchildren is largely influenced by the better quality of the relationship between the adult daughter and her parents in contrast with the relationship with the parents-in-law. More social support and stronger affective ties between the middle and old generations have a greater effect on the likelihood of forming salient ties between grandmothers and their grandchildren. A more refined study conducted by Monserud's (2008) using a three-generation perspective found that the quality of the relationship between the mother and her parents is associated with closeness between their grandchildren and their maternal grandparents. Particularly, closer ties between mothers and her own mothers were predictive of stronger bonds between children and their maternal grandmother, which was also the case for maternal grandfathers if the relationship between the mother and her father was close. The closeness of the child's father to their parents, both mother and father, was also found to be associated with stronger emotional ties between grandchildren and their paternal grandmother or paternal grandfather.

The emphasis on the mediating role of parents of the relationship between children and their grandparents disregards the active agentic role of grandparents in the process to enable and maintain a close relationship with their grandchildren. The literature on grandparenthood has been largely focused on individual, familial and structural structures that shape the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren, while largely disregarding the reciprocal influences, agentic and relational nature of these relationships and how they intersect with material and ideological structures of gender, age and generation. I shall explore in more detail the relational processes of these relationships, and its effect on the contact and the nature of the contact between grandparents and their grandchildren.

Emotional closeness between grandparents and grandchildren

While much of the literature on family intimacy has largely focused on the parent-child relationship (Timonen and Arber, 2012), the study of emotional/affective ties in interpersonal relationships needs to be extended to include grandparent-grandchild relationships. Szinovacz (1998) criticised the lack of research on grandparenthood that obviates the complexity, heterogeneity and dynamism of relationships between grandparents and grandchildren. This has also been the case for the understanding of factors shaping the patternings of emotional closeness between generations in families. Typically, emotional ties between grandparents and grandchildren have been conceptualised as natural, which disregards differences in intergenerational emotional bonds between these two groups (Boon and Brussoni, 1996, Connidis, 2010). Notwithstanding, some studies analysing intergenerational patterns of emotionalities between grandparents and grandchildren point to diversity in the feelings of closeness between these two generations (Kennedy, 1991). In the sections that follow I describe research studies that have focused on intergenerational emotional ties between grandparents and grandchildren by a series of individual, family and structural characteristics.

Socio-demographic characteristics and intergenerational emotional closeness

Differences in close emotional ties between grandparents and grandchildren have been found by gender and lineage of grandparents. Typically, grandmothers are more likely to report stronger emotional ties with their grandchildren compared to grandfathers (e.g. Boon and Brussoni, 1996, Silverstein and Marengo, 2001, Silverstein and Long, 1998b). However, there are some inconclusive results in the literature about the extent to which gender of the grandparent is a good predictor of intergenerational emotional closeness. For instance, Block (2000) using a small sample of grandmothers and grandfathers found no association between gender of the grandparent and closeness to the grandchild. Others have pointed to gender bias as a barrier in the understanding of relations between grandfathers and grandchildren (Uhlenberg, 1996). For example, a qualitative study conducted by Roberto et al. (2001) found grandfathers might transcend traditional male role expectations and actively participate in their

grandchild's life in a significant way. The authors found differences in the experiences of closeness between grandfathers, with some having a distant relationship with their grandchildren and some others *doing* an active involvement to create closeness through participating in shared activities, providing support and assistance and helping with emotional adjustment of their grandchildren. In the light of a new context of family and gender norms and behaviours, there is little research on how grandfathers enact and negotiate their role and the meaning and significance of the relationship with their grandchildren (Timonen and Arber, 2012, Mann, 2007), which can also obscure understanding of the diversity of ways in doing emotionally close relationships between grandparents and grandchildren.

Work on family research ties have also noted effects of lineage in the patternings of emotional closeness between generations in families. Some studies suggest that maternal grandparents are more likely to report stronger emotional ties to their grandchildren than any other grandparent (e.g. Eisenberg, 1988, Uhlenberg and Hammill, 1998). For example, Chan and Elder's study (2000a) found that among young adult grandchildren, maternal grandparents were more likely to have a close relationship than paternal grandparents. Despite some evidence indicating distinctive effects of lineage on patternings of intergenerational emotional closeness, the effects on emotional ties are inconclusive. For instance, in a study with 1,345 grandchildren reporting on the relationship with both their maternal and paternal grandparents, Davey and colleagues (2009) found that the levels of closeness between lineage was found to be approximately the same, although there was a greater feeling of closeness between grandchildren towards their maternal grandmothers compared to paternal grandmothers. Further, Monserud's study (2008) of the relationship of adult grandchildren aged 18-23 with their grandparents refines the analysis of the effects of lineage in predicting emotional ties between grandchildren and grandparents. She found that intergenerational emotional ties are mediated by the perception of the quality of the relationship between the child's parents and their own parents. The better quality of relationship between daughters and their mother was found to predict stronger feelings of closeness between grandchildren and the maternal grandmother. Yet, this was not found for the relationship between the child's father with their in-laws. By contrast, the effects of the adult son-parents' quality of relationship and

emotional closeness between grandchildren and grandparents was only consistent for paternal grandfathers.

The effects of gender and lineage of grandparents and the effects on intergenerational emotional closeness may be intersected by other individual and social characteristics which might interfere with or be confounded with the perception of an emotionally close relationship. The age of a grandparent and grandchild has been pointed out to have a negative effect on affectual ties; as both generations age there are declines in the perception of emotional closeness between generations (Mills et al., 2001). Age effects on emotional closeness, however, are inconclusive. As shown by Silverstein and Long (1998a) older grandparents might report higher feelings of emotional closeness compared to their younger counterparts. Also, grandparents with a low education attainment and younger reported stronger feelings of closeness with their grandchildren. Nonetheless, the level of education and age of grandparents had no significant effects on emotional closeness holding frequency of contact and quality of the relationship with parents and adult children constant (Silverstein and Marengo, 2001). In this thesis, I shall investigate gender and lineage of grandparents as relational processes and practices to elucidate variations of emotional closeness between grandparents with their grandchildren.

Age and gender of grandchildren

There is little agreement in the literature of the effects of age of the grandchild and emotional closeness. Davey and colleagues (2009) cross-sectional study using data from 1,345 grandchildren aged between 9 and 20 years found that younger grandchildren systematically reported more close ties with their maternal grandmothers and paternal grandfathers. However, longitudinal reports of grandchild-grandparent closeness rather than pointing to significant increases or decreases of the emotional ties across the life course of grandchildren, the evidence signals continuities across the lifecourse of individuals (Ferguson et al., 2004). Other studies have noted the sparse and inconclusive effect of age on grandparent-grandchild relationships (Silverstein and Long, 1998a).

Gender of the grandchild has been found as a predictor of the variability of grandparent-grandchild relationship quality with some studies highlighting that granddaughters report stronger ties with their grandparents compared to grandsons (Eisenberg, 1988). For example, Silverstein and Long (1998a) found that on average granddaughter-grandmother ties were stronger than the pair grandson-grandfather dyads. A similar finding was found in a study of grandchildren conducted by Dubas (2001), with same sex grandparent-grandchild dyads reporting higher scores of closeness compared to mixed dyads. These studies targeted young or adult grandchildren rather than infant grandchildren. Infant children are largely dependent on the middle generation (i.e. their parents), and it is not later in their adolescence that they can form independent relationships with their grandparents. The role of culture as a driver of intergenerational relationships, as suggested by the *kin-keeper* theory¹, might help understand gender differences in emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents.

However, similar to the effects of age of the grandchild, there is no consensus in the literature about gender effects of the grandchild on the quality of the relationship with grandparents. For instance, Creasey and Kaliher (1994) found little evidence of differences in the affection of the relationship between granddaughters and grandsons with their grandparents, although they found significant differences in the level of intimacy, as disclosure of the self, and instrumental aid, with granddaughters reporting higher scores than grandsons. In a similar vein, Hodgson's (1992) study with 208 adult grandchildren found no differences by gender of the grandchild on reporting closeness to their grandparents, with both granddaughters and grandsons reporting emotionally closer relationships to grandmothers. Alternatively, Davey and colleagues (2009) found lower levels of closeness among granddaughters compared to grandsons.

In this research age and gender of the grandchild are understood as part of the contextual dimension of grandparent and grandchild relationships. However, it is rather anticipated that investigation of closeness of infant grandchildren by gender and age will have little relevance in understanding variability of grandparent/grandchild relationships. In the quantitative data analysis grandchild's age is constant across

¹ For a detailed discussion see chapter 3.

intergenerational relationships between grandchildren and grandparent, as such it cannot account for any variation in the perception of closeness between families. Nonetheless, young grandchildren's age and gender in the qualitative dimension might bring about differently gendered coded patterns of relationships and practices that help construct a sense of intimacy over time in the multiple grandparent-grandchild dyads.

Structural opportunities for enabling emotional closeness

The sources of diversity of emotional close ties between grandparents and their grandchildren have been examined in relation to a series of structural factors and family life events that mediate in the feelings of closeness in these relationships. Findings from the literature show that there is a strong association between the frequency of contact and close emotional bonds between different generations in families (see Kennedy, 1991, Silverstein and Marengo, 2001, Hodgson, 1992, Brown, 2003). Boon and Brussoni's (1996) study reports on 171 undergraduates in western Canada about their perception of emotional closeness with grandparents. Two groups of grandchildren were compared; grandchildren who felt emotionally close to at least one grandparent and a second group reporting on the grandparent whom they have the most contact. The authors found substantial differences between relationships felt as close in comparison to those felt as distant in relation to the frequency of contact. Grandchildren feeling close had more and diverse contact with their grandparents, and attached greater importance to contact in comparison to grandchildren not feeling close to any of the grandparents. In addition, grandparents who had more influence in grandchildren's life were more likely to have an emotionally close relationship. This was also found in Davey's and colleagues (2009) study of 1,345 grandchildren aged 9 to 20 in the US reporting on their maternal and paternal grandparents, with stronger emotional ties with those grandparents whom they have more frequent contact. These findings reasserted the importance of intergenerational contact between grandparents and grandchildren for enabling emotional closeness between them, regardless of gender or lineage of the grandparent. However, Ferguson's and colleagues' study (2004) found that although older grandchildren were less likely to have frequent contact with their grandparents, this did not mean they felt less close.

Grandparents living closer to their grandchildren were also found to report feeling emotionally closer than geographically distant grandparents (Cooney and Smith, 1996, Roberto et al., 2001, Uhlenberg and Kirby, 1998). However, there is some contradiction about the effects of geographical propinquity in predicting affectionate ties between grandchildren and grandparents. For example, Davey and colleagues (2009) found that greater geographical distance between grandchildren and grandparents was associated with higher levels of closeness, although this was only the case for paternal grandmothers. Nonetheless, Roberto et al. (2001) examined the life experiences of 45 grandfathers focusing on the relationship with their grandchildren aged at least 16. The study found that living in close proximity with a grandchild increased the perception of having an emotionally close relationship. By contrast, family life transitions such as moving away or widowhood had a negative effect in maintaining a close relationship. The effects of geographical proximity on closeness in grandchild-grandparent relationships is considered in this thesis because, as previously shown, this indicator is an important structural aspect of the relationship between grandchildren and grandparents shaping the frequency of contact, which can preclude generating emotional closeness between these two groups.

Shared activities of daily living between grandchildren and grandparents

The type of involvement of grandparents in the life of their grandchildren have also been conceptualised based on the style of grandparenting. An early typology of grandparenthood was suggested by Neugarten and Weinstein (1964) who identified five styles of grandparenting based on 70 grandparent-grandchild pairs. Each style was characterised according to the type of involvement the grandparent had with the grandchild, which included behaviours and the significance they attached to the relationship with their grandchildren. *Fun-seeker* grandparents engage in a series of activities for fun, whereas *surrogate* grandparents are mainly providers of childcare. The *distant* grandparent only engages occasionally in special family occasions, while *formal* grandparents follow prescriptive roles of grandparenting and provide some baby-sitting, and, finally, the *reservoir of the family* offers special skills and resources. Similarly, Cherlin and Furstenberg (1985) also developed a typology of grandparenting based on the type of involvement of grandparent in the life of

grandchildren. This typology distinguishes between three types of grandparents: *remote*, *involved* and *companionate*. Crucially, companionate grandparents were found to engage in informal and leisure-oriented activities that would provide emotional satisfaction. Companionate grandparents were more likely to report feelings of closeness and loving towards their grandchildren compared to remote and companionate grandparents. However, involved grandparents had an active almost daily role of providing childcare, with little time for leisure activities. Those who were in the remote style would hardly see their grandchildren, and expressed distant feelings with them.

Albeit these conceptualisations of the grandparenting styles give a certain indication of relevant activities between grandparents and their grandchildren, they provide little indication of the associations between activities of daily living or the type of grandparental involvement and feelings of closeness between grandparents and grandchildren. Neither they allow to capture the dynamics and complexities of family structure and relations and grandparenting experiences with their grandchildren that mediate in the nature and extent of these generational emotional relationships.

However, some studies have investigated the relation between shared activities between grandchildren and grandparents and feelings of closeness. For instance, Kennedy (1992c) looked into 29 activities grandchildren shared with their most-close grandparent concluding that these activities are the backbones of interpersonal connection through which affection is expressed. The study indicates that the greater perceived closeness between generations is associated with a larger number of shared activities. Gender was found to play a role in the type of activities grandmothers and grandfathers engaged with their grandchildren. Grandmothers were more likely to engage in family caring and other social and communication activities, while grandfathers engaged in more instrumental activities. This relationship between emotional closeness and shared activities between grandchildren and grandparents was also explored in a study conducted by Boon and Brussoni (1998b). The study shows that young adult grandchildren engaged in a larger number of activities with grandparents whom they felt emotionally close compared to grandchildren whose relationship was not perceived as close. Hyde and Gibbs (1993) found in a small UK-

based study with young adult granddaughters that the relationship with their maternal grandmother was felt closest among all grandparents, but there were also negative sentiments towards them for unwanted advice. Yet, little has been done on the particularities and influence of the practices of everyday life in enacting an emotionally close relationship between grandchildren and grandparents.

Albeit the contribution to describing the ways grandparents participate in the life of their grandchildren, these studies lack a theoretical explanation guiding the relationship between shared activities and daily living and the enactment of feelings of emotional closeness between generations in a family. The majority of these studies are descriptive and offer no theoretical framework to guide the analysis of the findings of the relationship between shared activities of daily living and emotional closeness between grandparents and grandchildren.

Marital and partnership trends in contemporary societies

In describing late twentieth-century changes of family and intergenerational relationships, two significant and far-reaching social forces are identified as the triggers of these changes. First, broad demographic shifts (see discussion in this chapter). Secondly, social and cultural transformations resulting in new and complex patterns of family and household formation. These wide demographic and social trends act as a backdrop for individuals to take decisions that affect their current and future generations.

In recent decades, patterns of family formation and structure have been affected by shifts in marriage and partnership, which has led to the emergence of a diversity of family structures and generational living arrangements, intersecting social and economic transformations and altogether constructing new and complex needs and demands for care and wellbeing. Susan McRae (1999) identified some of the changes in the patterns of family configuration and living in the UK in the twentieth century such as a larger number of one-person households, cohabitation, stepfamilies and lone-parent families. This diversity and complex coexistence of new and old family forms arguably have significant impacts on the opportunities and needs for members of the various generations in families to relate with each other and the nature and quality of the relationships.

The most significant cause of these changes in family life is the increasing proportion of marriages ending in divorce or separation. The rate of marital breakdown has been growing since the mid-nineteenth century in the US and Europe, with rapid increases since the 1970s (Cherlin and Furstenberg, 1992, Connidis, 2010, Haskey, 2002). Of particular relevance in new family composition trends and changes in family life is the number of children growing up in single-mother households (Connidis, 2010). In the late 1980s British households headed by one-parent only were estimated over a million making one in eight dependent children living in such households (Crow and Hardey, 1992). More recent estimates indicate that single-parent households are about a quarter of the total families in Great Britain (Haskey, 2002). However, rather than an ongoing increase in divorce rates, patterns of marital dissolution in Europe and the US have reached a plateau already in the 1990s (Casper and Bianchi, 2002). Within this context family life and relationships have become more complex and family configurations are no longer immutable across the life course of individuals (Connidis, 2010). In this vein, grandparent-grandchild relationships are subjected to changes over time, especially in the event of parental divorce or separation. Marital breakdown may affect family life and relationships between family members leading to readjustments in the relationships between parents, children and grandparents. As a result, grandparents might lose their relationship or gain a new set of relations as parents re-marry (Timonen and Arber, 2012).

The effects of marital breakdown on grandparenting

Following couple breakdown new family arrangements and relationships may need to be renegotiated leading to varied outcomes in the type and extent of grandparents' family involvement (Douglas and Ferguson, 2003, Drew and Smith, 1999). These new and old arrangements and patternings of intergenerational relationships, obligations and responsibilities between family members after marital breakdown may help to explain differences in grandparents' involvement with their grandchild's life. As noted in some studies, following divorce or separation of the middle generation grandparents might step in to provide childcare (Dench and Ogg, 2002) or help with emotional adjustment of their children and grandchildren (Bridges et al., 2007, Ferguson et al., 2004). However, there are important differences in the process of renegotiation of

family relationships and responsibilities that might have an effect on intergenerational relationships between grandparents and grandchildren.

As noted in some of the literature on interpersonal relationships, divorce or separation in contemporary family life is a significant life course event that can abruptly change intergenerational contact and quality of relationship between family members (Uhlenberg and Hammill, 1998, King, 2003a, Gladstone, 1988, Szinovacz, 1998). The possibility structure of grandparents to relate with their grandchildren may be severely reshaped as a result of parental separation or divorce. The grandparents' role in a single-parent family may experience substantial transformations as family demands for support and care are redefined by new social, structural and material circumstances. Nonetheless, family obligations can continue after parental divorce in a new setting within which formal links have disappeared as a result of marital breakdown rendering conventional kinship terminology of little meaning to people to describe their relationship to one another (Cheal, 2002). Yet, some evidence points that family responsibilities and obligations have more aspects of continuities than changes following marital dissolution (Bridges et al., 2007). This is particularly visible in the form of intergenerational transfers of time, social and financial support and aid from parents to adult children and grandchildren (Bridges et al., 2007, Ferguson et al., 2004, Bengtson, 2001b). Alternatively, some research points to substantial decreases in the level of closeness between generations and lower levels of satisfaction with the grandparent role following parental family breakdown (Drew and Smith, 1999). However, this association has been found to be related to the quality of bonds between generations in families. For instance, Bridges and colleagues (2007) using data from the (UK) longitudinal Avon Brothers and Sisters study found that grandparents' involvement in the life of their grandchildren following parental separation was associated to the extent of closeness that grandparents had with the custodial parent, with greater involvement among those families with stronger feelings of closeness.

The consequences of parental breakdown on the nature and extent of grandparent-grandchild relationships vary among and between grandparents, and might be contingent upon individual, family and social characteristics that shape their involvement in family life. For example, there are differences in the effect of divorce on the relationship by the gender of the grandparent. Research work indicates that the

effects of parental divorce on the frequency of contact between grandparents and grandchildren has substantially more negative impacts for grandfathers compared to grandmothers (Jamieson et al. 2012). However, gender is not the only social structuring factor driving differences in the relationships between grandparents and grandchildren, but also lineage may be a factor in explaining these differences. Various scholars pointed to a matrilineal advantage, and a double disadvantage constituted by gender and lineage by which paternal grandfathers experience the larger decrease in contact in the event of marital breakdown (Jamieson et al., 2012, Ferguson et al., 2004, Kruk and Hall, 1995). The matrifocal tilt in family relationships is argued to be accentuated following parental divorce or separation (Bridges et al., 2007). For example, Dench and Ogg (2002) using the British Values Survey 1998 found that maternal grandparents are more likely to provide childcare for divorced adult children compared to never-divorced couples. Paternal grandparents can alternatively experience a substantial decline in the contact and closeness with grandchildren and are less likely to provide any childcare after separation or divorce (Herlofson and Hagestad, 2012). Yet, low levels of contact are not irremediably linked with a concomitant decrease or disappearance of emotional closeness between grandparents and grandchildren (Ferguson et al. 2004).

There is some contention in the link between parental divorce or separation and emotional closeness between grandparents and grandchildren. Silverstein and Marengo (2001) survey of 920 grandparents living in the U.S. revealed a significant positive association between the continuity in the marital status of parents and feelings of closeness between grandparents and grandchildren. The effects of divorce also mediate in the frequency of contact between generations and the formation of emotional ties. For instance, Ferguson and colleagues (2004) study with teenage grandchildren of divorced families disputes the link between frequency of contact and closeness felt by the grandchild. They found that levels of closeness remained strong despite low frequency of contact between grandparents and grandchildren. In a similar vein, Mahne's and colleagues' (2012) study using a national representative sample of the population aged over 40 in Germany found that strong emotional ties between grandparents and grandchildren counteract the negative effects on the frequency of contact following the divorce of a son. The lack of a link between contact and closeness

in the study could be partly explained by the fact that grandchildren and grandparents had previously formed strong bonds that prevail over family transitions distorting the type and extent of contact between grandparents and grandchildren. This finding was also found in a study conducted by Silverstein and Long (1998a) pointing to continuities in the level of closeness across time, while contact and proximity showed significant decreases as the grandchild and grandparent grow older. Finally, Lussier's and colleagues' (2002) study using the Avon Brothers and Sisters study examined the association between closeness between grandchildren and grandparents and family type. They found significant lower levels of closeness between grandchildren living in single-mother households and their maternal grandmothers and paternal grandparents compared to grandchildren in two-parent household in children's reports.

Much of the empirical research on the effects of marital dissolution on grandparent-grandchild relationships has almost exclusively focussed on the incidence of this event in the middle generation. However, divorce or separation has also become more likely among older couples (Tomassini et al., 2004). For instance, King and Elder (1997) noted that although parental divorce has a significant impact on the grandparents' involvement in family life, grandparents' divorce has equally considerable effects in reshaping intergenerational ties. King's (2003) study found lower contact with grandchildren in divorced or separated grandparents, and also a lower involvement in the activities of day-to-day life of the grandchild, and lower feelings of closeness with the grandchildren in comparison to intact couples. Other studies have also found lower feelings of emotional closeness between grandchildren and divorced grandfathers compared to those who are still in couple (Jamieson et al., 2012). Gender differences between grandparents in the maintenance of contact supports the view of a sexual division of family involvement. Anna Tarrant (2012) suggests that grandfatherhood is often ignored in studies supporting a view that only values the more traditional feminised activities such as caring and phoning. While there is ample evidence of the matrilineal advantage of grandparents (Chan and Elder, 2000a) in divorce or separated families, little is clear among divorced grandparents about the consequences for the quality of the relationship with their grandchildren. Thus, emotional asymmetries between grandparents and their grandchildren need to be examined in the light of

complex family life negotiations, decisions and arrangements that have direct consequences for the development of emotional ties across generations.

In a context of greater marital instability multigenerational ties might be affected by tensions and strains resulting from emotional, material and practical difficulties and adjustments. Tensions between the middle and old generations in families can arise as grandparents and parents hold different expectations about the extent and type of involvement in family life after couple dissolution (Dench and Ogg, 2002), and might have substantial consequences in the organisation of family life. Grandparents' involvement in the life of their grandchildren after parental divorce or separation can be explained by parental conflict. For instance, Gladstone (1988) found that conflict between parents increases the likelihood of reducing contact between grandparents and their grandchildren. A consequence of these strains is the loss of contact of the father with the child, which consequently decreases the likelihood of paternal grandparents to continue being in contact with their grandchildren (King, 2003a). Similarly, Kruk and Hall (1995) explain the patrilineal disadvantage of grandparents to maintain a relationship with the grandchild(ren) after parental marital breakdown as the result of a disengagement of the father in their own child's life, which directly affects paternal grandparents' opportunities to contact the grandchild and maintain a regular involvement in her/his life. Others emphasise that the patrilineal disadvantage is a consequence of the custodial arrangements as the mother takes custody, the maternal grandparents are more likely to increase contact in detriment of paternal grandparents (Cooney and Smith, 1996). Westphal and colleagues (2015) adds some further evidence of the effects of custodial arrangements following parental divorce and contact between grandchildren and grandparents. The study highlights the importance of the role of conflict between parents in moderating the relationship between divorce and contact of grandchildren with their grandparents. By contrast, the negative effects between tension and decrease in contact might be offset or enhanced by the quality of the relationship between adult children and parents. Research on the quality of relationship between parents and grandparents, and grandparents and grandchildren contribute to explain the variation in the differences of support and involvement of grandparents in their grandchild's life in the event of parental divorce or separation. However, Douglas and Ferguson (2003) qualify this link by indicating that the quality

of the relationship before divorce shapes the following opportunities for grandparents' family involvement. More supportive and harmonious relationships before marital breakdown are associated with greater involvement and support after divorce or separation of child's parents.

From the studies discussed above it appears that grandparents have a strategic involvement following parental divorce. As indicated by Timonen and Doyle (2012) in a study of paternal grandparents of separated couple families in Ireland, grandparents use a series of strategies oriented towards securing contact with their grandchildren following marital break-up and strains between the parents. As such, there is some evidence that point to the importance of the agency of grandparents in gaining or maintaining access to their grandchildren in the event of parental divorce or separation. Acknowledging grandparents' agency in dealing with parental divorce or separation challenges the notion that grandparenting is mediated by the middle generation, and places the emphasises in relational processes (Roseneil and Ketokivi, 2016) and agency constructing intergenerational relationships.

Concluding comments

The study of grandparenting has amalgamated considerable evidence on the factors that affect the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren. A series of individual, family and structural factors have been found to have an effect on the variations in the extent to which grandparents provide childcare to their grandchildren or the frequency of contact between these two generations. However, there is a relative shortage of research on the understanding of how, and under what individual, family and social circumstances, an intimate relationship is enabled, enacted and sustained between grandparents and grandchildren. Notwithstanding the studies that considered affectual or emotional ties in grandparent-grandchild relationships, there are some caveats that limit the scope and understanding of social processes shaping the contours of such relationships.

Most of the research on grandparenthood and emotional closeness has treated intergenerational closeness as an independent variable to explain the existence and, if so, the frequency of contact between family members (Mahne and Huxhold, 2012),

although, as shown in this chapter, there are some exceptions exploring closeness between grandparents and grandchildren as contingent upon individual and family characteristics (Silverstein and Marengo, 2001, Monserud, 2008). Moreover, the findings of empirical research exploring closeness between grandparents and grandchildren have been largely of a descriptive nature. Yet, those studies that have used social theory to explain the findings have drawn on the ‘intergenerational solidarity model’². In this thesis, I explore the effects of a series of individual, familial and socio-structural factors that might be associated with closeness between grandchildren and maternal and paternal grandmothers and grandfathers. I will draw on the theoretical frameworks and key concepts of the intergenerational solidarity model, the lifecourse approach and the concept of ‘*ambivalence*’ to explain the findings of the analysis using the Growing in Up in Scotland study, a large nationally representative data of a cohort children born in Scotland (see chapter four for a detailed description). This is particularly important as most studies have used small purpose samples (Brown, 2003).

Furthermore, many of the works have adopted a restricted analytical scope of the study of grandparent-grandchild relationships. The large majority of work focuses on one particular grandparent-grandchild dyad chosen on the basis of a specific criterion such as the grandparent or grandchild who have an emotionally close relationship (Kennedy, 1992b, Boon and Brussoni, 1996) or selecting the first grandchild who responded to the baseline survey (Silverstein and Long, 1998a). The analysis in this study explores the close ties between grandchildren and four different types of grandparents, namely, maternal and paternal grandmothers and grandfathers. The analysis will be conducted for each grandchild-grandparent dyad, which will give a better understanding of the differences between gender and lineage lines of grandparents. As shown earlier in this chapter, these two aspects are salient in grandchild-grandparent relationships, and one of the aims of this study is to shed some light onto whether different structure of needs and opportunities of families and intergenerational solidarity behaviours affect maternal and paternal grandmothers and grandfathers in the same way. Crucially, this also involves taking into account

² This model is explained in detail in Chapter 2.

intergenerational relationships between grandparents and adult children as a factor mediating grandparent-grandchild relationships (Monserud, 2008, King, 2003a).

Overall, there is little research on which factors influence the possibilities of grandparents to construct a sense of an emotionally close relationship with their grandchildren. This is particularly the case in the grandchildren's early years with no systematic study illuminating the possible links between a range of individual, social and structural factors on the closeness with their grandparents. Whereas a few studies have considered closeness between grandchildren and different types of grandparents in a family, these studies have used young adult grandchildren (Monserud, 2008, Brown, 2003). A better understanding of the intergenerational relationships and the structures of needs and opportunities in families is required to assess the importance of relational and structural processes in the construction of intimate relationships between grandparents and grandchildren in their early years.

Also, a methodological aspect to take into account is the differently perceived relationship of closeness depending on the member of the family from which the data is collected. Giarrusso and colleagues (2001) study found evidence supporting that grandparents report greater affection towards their grandchildren than vice versa, although this was only consistent for granddaughters. Also, Lussier and colleagues (2002) research found notable differences in the ways parents and children report closeness to each of the grandparents. Nonetheless, much of the literature has often relied on the reports about one grandparent or grandchild reporting on the grandchild or grandparent whom feels closest to. Linked to differently perceptions of closeness of the relationship between family members, is the existing diversity in the meanings of closeness by different family members (Ferguson et al. 2004). This diversity in the interpretation of emotional closeness is often disregarded in the literature and little attention is paid to the ways grandparents produce meaning and attach importance to the relationship with the grandchild in different types of family. However, it is not my intention to discuss the different understandings of intimacy in different generations in a family. Instead, this thesis focuses on the meaning and significance of lived experiences of grandparents that constitute intimacy with their grandchildren, and examines whether there are lifecourse events such as parental and grandparental

divorce that distort such a relationship. To this end this thesis interviews grandparents about their relationship with their children and grandchildren.

Chapter Two:

Theoretical approaches to grandparent-grandchild relationship closeness

Introduction

The main aim of this chapter is to outline and discuss conceptualisations of grandparenthood and family responsibilities. These have been a subject of a growing debate on the continued importance of ‘family’ in shaping relational, practical and material aspects of the individual’s social life. As revealed in chapter 1, empirical research on emotional closeness in grandparent-grandchild relationships is scarce, and much of it has not been substantiated with social theory. Outlining the main debates and conceptualisations about intergenerational relationships across various generations in a family is important for two reasons. First, it sets the discussion of the explanations of the nature and content of relationships across various generations in a family. Secondly, it provides a series of analytical and conceptual research tools to approach the study of emotional closeness in intergenerational relationships between grandparents and their grandchildren. Importantly, in this study, the discussion of these concepts and key ideas will inform and substantiate the results from the secondary data analysis using the Growing Up in Scotland study. Also, these conceptual frameworks seek to inform social meaning of lived experiences of grandparents within the context of family life. This review is far from global and it limits its scope to North-American and British traditions of the understanding of family and grandparenthood.

This chapter is divided in four main sections. On the basis of the research questions, these four sections introduce a series of conceptual approaches and key theoretical ideas that will inform the analysis of the quantitative output in chapters 5, 6, 7, and guide some of the discussions in chapters 8 and 9. These frameworks have been used in combination to elucidate the ways in which socio-structural, relational and lifecourse aspects enable grandparents to enact and sustain emotional closeness with grandchildren within the context of family relationships. In the first section I discuss theories of social exchange and intergenerational solidarity to explain how and why

different structural and relational opportunities for the grandchild-grandparent interaction shape emotionally close relationships between grandparents and grandchildren. The second section looks at the lifecourse approach, particularly the concept of 'linked lives' that helps to explain how generational ties between family members shape the opportunities to form a close relationship between grandparents and grandchildren, but it also highlights how life events such as divorce or separation may reduce the opportunities of grandparents to enact a close relationship with their grandchildren. The third section draws on the intergenerational ambivalence approach to explain the mutually coexisting presence of closeness in strained situations between generations within a family that reduce the opportunities for developing close generational ties between grandparents and grandchildren. Also, the concept of 'ambivalence' is useful to reflect on the contradictions between social norms of grandparenting and grandparents' lived experiences and sentiments towards their grandchildren. The fourth section sheds some light on possible explanations for the variations in the grandchild-grandparent closeness by gender and lineage of grandparents, particularly contemplating that gender and lineage are relationally shaped, and themselves shape the opportunities of grandparents to build a strong relationship with the middle generation, particularly in the event of marital breakdown. It is expected that this thesis will contribute to close gaps in existing knowledge and contribute to empirical literature that sheds light onto the patternings of emotional closeness between grandparents and grandchildren.

Generational exchanges and solidarity in family life

As shown in the previous chapter, the empirical research literature on grandparenthood reveals a heterogeneity in the involvement of grandparents in family life, which is contingent upon a series of individual, family and social circumstances that inform about the presence, and extent of this presence, of grandparents in the life of their grandchildren. Aspects such as gender, lineage and generational relations have been offered as drivers of differences in the social contact, childcare support, and activities shared together between grandparents and grandchildren. However, it remains uncertain why these aspects influence grandparenting in such ways, and what effects they have on emotional closeness. There are two interlinked questions associated with

the research questions in this thesis: what drives family members across generations to support each other, and how this is linked to the formation of close emotional relationships between grandchildren and their grandparents?

An understanding of the development of emotional ties between grandparents and grandchildren requires the acknowledgement of variations in the ways grandparents participate in the life of their grandchildren. Different theoretical frameworks have conceptualised support and transfers of resources between members of a family in relation to personal motivations and expected future returns. For instance, the 'Social Exchange' theory postulates that individuals strategically participate in exchanges with others on the premise of maximising rewards and minimising costs in social exchanges (Emerson, 1976). The Social Exchange Theory suggests that individuals in a family provide support in exchange for immediate or future help or support (Cox and Rank, 1992). These relationships are maintained if they are mutually rewarding, which is contingent on the balance between power and dependence held by both parties in the exchange; those with greater resources hold more power. In this unbalanced situation, those who feel dependent may seek to balance the relationship by transferring resources in the form of, for instance, affection or emotional support (Lowenstein et al., 2001). However, this theory has found little support in the studies of family transfers as strategic bargaining for future returns, particularly in grandparents' transfers to children and grandchildren (Fergusson et al., 2004), although some level of reciprocity may be found in some cases in which grandparents receive support from their grandchildren (Grundy, 2005, Hoff, 2007).

A second motive explored in the literature of intergenerational transfers between individuals in a family is altruism. Altruism theory points out that help or support between generations in a family is provided solely by means of need without the expectation of a future return. This model posits that one generation with a greater amount of resources is drawn to help other generations with fewer resources. For instance, parents might transfer financial resources to poorer children in an effort to balance and equalise the financial circumstances and status among their children (McGarry and Schoeni, 1997). Grandparents' investment in their grandchildren could be explained using the same logic as transfers from parents to their children. However, some controversy and lack of evidence of altruistic motives in parental and

grandparental investments point to limitations in explaining intergenerational family transfers (for a review see Coall and Hertwig, 2010), let alone the motives that explain an emotionally close relationship between family members in situations in which there are asymmetries in the transfers of resources and support. In addition, the altruism theory offers little theoretical room to explain family relations in which conflict and strains appear hand in hand with feelings of being emotionally close (Connidis, 2010). Notably, altruism remains as a rhetoric of idealised family behaviours, rather than an actual behaviour between members in a family. Yet, altruism as a socially embedded discourse in family relationships remains interesting to explore and understand the ways grandparents articulate their commitment towards their grandchildren, and whether this is related to a sense of an emotional connection between these two social groups.

While the Social Exchange and altruism theories are concerned with rules and motivations for transfers of support and care between family members within a family, these theories are based on a formal premise of exchanges among group members, and particularly they do not suggest links between these behaviours and emotional closeness between individuals. What remains to be explained is why different grandparents have a greater participation in the life of their grandchildren and how this is related to the development of emotional closeness. The ‘Intergenerational Solidarity Model’ (Roberts and Bengtson, 1990) was developed partly as a response to the explanatory limitations of the exchange and altruism theories for the description and understanding of parents’ investments and transfers towards their children, and a reaction to the underdeveloped research on family ties solely centred on the frequency of interaction as the explanation of them (Bengtson and Roberts, 1991). The intergenerational model refers to patterns of solidarity between family members at different stages of the lifecourse that promote intergenerational family cohesion. Importantly, this model emphasises the multiple dimensions of generational relations in support, sentiment, cohesion and interaction (Bengtson, 2001b).

The main assumption of the intergenerational solidarity model is that the strength of ties or links between family members in a family can be characterised by different dimensions of family solidarity. Vern Bengtson’s formulation of intergenerational

solidarity devised six dimensions of intergenerational solidarity: associational (interaction), affective (positive sentiment; emotional closeness), consensual (agreement or similarity in values and beliefs), functional (help and support provided), normative (familialism) and structural (opportunity structure for intergenerational relationships) (Bengtson et al., 2002b). While at first Bengtson's formulation of intergenerational solidarity was exclusively oriented in predicting the existence of solidarity between generations, subsequent discussions included the possibility of conflictual relationships as a recurrent aspect in family relationships, and it is partly driven by a lower commitment towards one another and translated to poorer feelings of solidarity (Ibid). However, solidarity and conflict are not mutually exclusive. High solidarity can occur in situations of high conflict.

Several aspects of the intergenerational solidarity model have contributed to the understanding of patterns of intergenerational solidarity between generations in a family. First, it brought some theoretical and analytical developments of solidarity between generations in a family, understanding these as multiple forms of solidarity that may simultaneously occur in building family cohesion. Secondly, it foregrounded the importance of positive sentiments and feelings between family members as a crucial dimension of family solidarity. However, affectual solidarity has largely been theorised and operationalised as an independent variable affecting associational solidarity, with evidence suggesting that the existence of positive sentiments and feelings enhance the possibilities for contact and interaction between generations (e.g. Uhlenberg and Hammill, 1998). This assumes that feelings of closeness precede social interaction. Finally, although the initial formulation was conceived as a model of the solidarity behaviours between parents and adult children, as suggested by Silverstein and colleagues (1998a), this model can also be used for the study of grandparent-grandchild relationships. However, the intergenerational solidarity model has been little used to explore and explain emotional close or distant ties between generations within a family (see chapter 1 for a review). It is argued in this thesis that affectual solidarity conceptualised as emotional closeness between grandparents and grandchildren is contingent upon other dimensions of solidarity such as the functional or associational that shape variations in the ways individuals perceive close relationships.

However, the intergenerational solidarity model has some weaknesses limiting the capacity to explain the observed variability of emotional patterns of grandparents with their grandchildren. One of these weaknesses is the lack of an explicit formulation of the relationship between emotional closeness and the relationship with other family members such as the parental and grandparental generation. The intergenerational solidarity model examines the relationship between pairs of individuals, rather than the whole network of family relationships. It is less clear how the relationship between the grandchild's parent and grandparent affects the grandparent-grandchild relationship. Nonetheless, the relevance of the relationship between parents and grandparents is of utmost importance for considering the possibilities of grandparents to interact with their grandchildren, particularly at the time the grandchildren are in their early years with little or no capacity to decide over their actions and relationships with their grandparents. Certainly, the structure of opportunities for interaction between grandparents and their grandchildren is contingent upon the middle generation (e.g. Mahne and Huxhold, 2012), and it can be argued that on the basis of this relationship grandparents will have more or fewer chances to develop a close or intimate relationship with their grandchildren. Similarly, the structure of family needs, as noted in the empirical research literature, shapes the extent to which grandparents participate in the life of their grandchildren. Thus, the needs for support of childcare can also be considered as part of the structure of opportunities for grandparents to develop close ties with their grandchildren.

The multiple aspects of the structural dimension of solidarity have been variously employed in previous research about grandparenting (e.g. Silverstein and Marengo, 2001). The conceptualisation of the structural dimension used for the purposes of this thesis emphasises the mediating character of family needs that enhance or preclude opportunities of grandparents to providing support and interacting with their grandchildren. The characterisation of family needs in this thesis includes economic and temporal resources, which are captured through the household income and the mother's employment status. Two other socio-demographic characteristics of the grandchild's mother have been found in previous research to influence grandparenting. These are the mother's educational level and the age of mother at childbirth that affect social contact and support from grandparents to their grandchildren (e.g. Gray, 2005).

These have been added as factors that may explain variations in closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents. It is argued that these factors will likely increase the needs for childcare support from grandparents in the form of babysitting or looking after the grandchild, as well as lead to greater opportunities to engage in leisure activities with grandchildren. Also, the geographical proximity of the grandparents will enhance the opportunities of grandparents to provide support and interact with the grandchild. The particular analytical outlook in this thesis about the connection of family needs and opportunities for interaction with emotional closeness between grandparents and grandchildren is concerned with the fact that socio-structural circumstances in families shape the extent grandparents can interact with their grandchildren, and, importantly, it is through social contact that grandparents construct a sense of emotional closeness. However, this model provides little indication of the relevance of life events such as divorce or separation in family relationships, and how these influence intergenerational patterns of closeness.

Drawing on the intergenerational model it is argued that the functional and associational dimensions of family solidarity act as factors in their own right in shaping the patternings of emotional closeness between grandparents and grandchildren. The frequency of grandparents' provision of support to the grandchild is a direct measure of the grandparents' participation in the life of grandchildren. This involvement is here understood as a way grandparents construct a sense of a close relationship and express care and affection towards grandchildren. The operationalisation of the functional solidarity in this thesis is encapsulated in the frequency to which grandparents look after the grandchild, the frequency of babysitting and having the grandchild to stay overnight. The intensity or strength of these aspects of this dimension of solidarity can help to explain variations in the perception of mothers of the closeness between grandparents and grandchildren. In a similar vein, the strength of associational solidarity between grandparents and grandchildren will likely increase the perception of a close relationship between grandchildren and their grandparents. This is captured in this thesis through the frequency to which grandparents go on outings with the grandchild. A higher frequency of grandparents engaging with their grandchildren is expected to increase the chances of such grandparents being perceived as emotionally close to their grandchildren.

The lifecourse approach

The use of the intergenerational solidarity model in the study of grandparenting has been largely focused on the grandparent-grandchild relationship dyad (Boon and Brussoni, 1996), and it has often disregarded the influence of the whole family network in shaping intergenerational relationships between these two generational groups. However, there are some studies that have emphasised a need to take into account the effects of other intergenerational relationships within the family network to understand the extent to which non-adjacent family members are given the opportunity to interact with one another (Aldous, 1995, Roberto et al., 2001). For instance, some studies have shown the importance of the quality of the relationship between the members of the middle and old generation in enabling the formation of close bonds between young adult grandchildren and their grandparents (e.g. Brown, 2003). As it has been argued elsewhere (Hagestad and Lang, 1986, Silverstein and Marenco, 2001, King and Elder, 1995b), analysing grandparent-grandchild relationships is inexorably linked to the parallel understanding of parent-grandchild and grandparent-adult parent relationships. Thus, this thesis adopts a three-generational perspective to the study of variations in emotional ties between grandchildren and their grandparents.

The lifecourse approach principle of '*linked lives*' (Elder et al., 2003) is particularly relevant for the study of intergenerational relationships between grandparents and grandchildren. This principle emphasises the intersecting lifecourse of grandparents, parents and grandchildren within intergenerational family relationships. The interdependences of lives of various generational members within a family highlight the embeddedness of social circumstances and opportunities of one generation over the opportunities of another generation within a family. Following the linked lives principle, in this thesis it is argued that emotional closeness between grandparents and grandchildren is not only a result of the strength of solidarity between these two generations, but also an outcome of the mediating effect of parents that regulates the social interaction and contact between their own parents and their children, but also through the adult child's relationship with her/his own parents or parents-in-law. The quality of the relationship between grandparents and the grandchild's parents mediates the opportunities for grandparents to participate in the life of their grandchildren by

either providing support, engaging in shared activities or participating in some other meaningful way in the life of their grandchildren (see chapter 1 for a detailed review). This may be particularly the case, or it is more likely to occur, in the early years of grandchildren, a time in the life of grandchildren in which they are largely dependent upon their parents, but also a life stage in which childcare demands or support of any other kind is more likely to be more intense (Gray, 2005). While the mediatory role of the grandchild's parents has been noted in the research literature, the extent to which grandparents' relationships with their children or children-in-law influences the relationship between the grandparents of the opposite lineage and grandchildren has yet to be fully explored, but this may further our understanding of complex intergenerational emotional ties in family relationships. This thesis examines both the effects of the relationship between the grandchild's parents and grandparents, and the effects of this relationship on the opposite set of grandparents in the extent to which the grandchild's mother perceive emotional ties between the grandchild and their grandparents.

The operationalisation of the mediatory effect of parents' influential position in the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren is captured through the social connection between the grandchild's parents and grandparents. It is assumed that a positive relationship between the middle and old generation in a family facilitates the contact and interaction of grandparents with grandchildren. Also, drawing on the principle of linked lives, I argue that the structure of opportunities to develop a close relationship between grandparents and grandchildren is mediated by the relationship between the grandchild's mother and the grandparents of the other lineage. It is likely that social contact between the grandchild's mother and a set of grandparents decreases the opportunities for interaction of the other set of grandparents to form a close relationship with the grandchild.

Another important aspect in the study of grandparent-grandchild relationships is the changing nature of family relationships across time, particularly as a consequence of life events that occur throughout the lifecourse of one or more generations within a family (King and Elder, 1995a, Katz and Lowenstein, 2010). The lifecourse perspective is a reaction against theoretical approaches conceptualising social roles

and structures as fixed entities across time. Instead, lifecourse proponents emphasise the transformative nature of historical events and life transitions in the development of the individual, that is individual lives are interdependent over time, and life events have effects on social relationships (Elder, 1998, Elder et al., 2003). Indeed, the lifecourse perspective focuses attention on the changes that occur as individuals get older. These changes are motivated by life events intersecting the individual's life course such as birth of a child or grandchild, marriage or divorce. However, life course proponents argue that life events impact individuals in a diversity of ways rather than homogenously, although the extent and type of change is vaguely discussed (Casper and Bianchi, 2002).

The strength of the lifecourse approach lies in the emphasis on accounting life events as powerful transitions that transform biographies and interactions between family members and alter roles and structures (Bengtson and Allen, 1993), as well as acknowledging the link between personal stories and society. Consequently, an individual's life is influenced by the historical and personal situation they live in. David Morgan (1996) summarises the life course analysis as 'complex exchanges between individual change, household change and historical change' (p.34). These three dimensions of change interplay with each other, they influence individuals' trajectories, which are no longer immutable but dynamic, situational and contextual, that is family relationships change over time (e.g. Smart and Neale, 1999, Silva and Smart, 1998, Finch, 2007).

Changes in the generational relationships in a family are even more likely in contemporary societies as new patterns of family formation and composition such as divorce, remarriage, same sex couples or periods of living alone require new definitions and relationships (Finch, 2007). Similarly, patternings of the grandparent-grandchild relationship are not static over the life course (Silverstein and Marengo, 2001). Interconnected individual trajectories and relationships within changing social and economic contexts are also likely to influence family practices and the emotional involvement of family members. Particularly, these changes are likely to influence the opportunities of grandparents to access and interact with their grandchildren. Parental divorce is likely to have a strong effect on the nature and extent of involvement and significance of the activities maternal and paternal grandparents share in the lives of

their grandchildren. Crucially, the continuity of involvement of grandparents in the life of their grandchildren can forge and maintain a sense of familial unit despite changes in the residential arrangements (Timonen and Doyle, 2012). However, there has been little consideration in the ways separation or divorce between grandparents changes the emotional ties between grandparents and grandchildren (King, 2003a). This thesis examines the influence of parental and grandparental divorce or separation on the closeness of grandchildren with their grandparents.

The relevance of drawing on the lifecourse approach in the present PhD research is justified by the strengths of the analytical underpinnings developed by this approach, setting a conceptual background that allows us to encapsulate the transitions through which grandparents experience their personal time, while reminding us of the links between the lifecourse of the different members across generations within a family. Crucially, the lifecourse approach emphasises the diverse character of individual experiences in similar societal contexts and the diversity in the ways families live and family members relate to each other. Hence, this approach is particularly useful in the study of grandparent-grandchild relationships and the links with the patternings of emotional closeness shaped by the intersection of personal and familial times.

Ambivalences in family life

The relationship between intergenerational family relationships and emotional closeness in modern societies is saturated with ambivalence. In contemporary modern societies individuals' ambiguity about their roles in family life is a result of rapid social change and influences the ways individuals feel, act and relate with other family members (Lowenstein et al., 2001). The emergence of the concept of ambivalence for the study of family relationships was a reaction against the normative underpinnings of the intergenerational solidarity model characterised by a reigning harmony and its implicit universal notion of solidarity in family relationships (Luescher and Pillemer, 1998). In an early empirical analysis of the intergenerational solidarity model conducted by Atkinson, Kivett and Campbell (1986), it was noted that while associational solidarity was present in solidary relationships, consensual solidarity did not occur simultaneously. This finding disputed the interdependent and simultaneously

occurring nature of dimensions of intergenerational solidarity. This study opened the debate to the possibility of the absence of consensus and affection in parent-child solidary relationships, leading to the conclusion that association, affection and consensus were not always simultaneously occurring phenomena. The shortcomings of the intergenerational solidarity model, namely, the normative view and the failure to address the negotiated nature of family relationships, were key elements in developing an alternative approach that would address and describe changes and patterns in family ties.

Luescher and Pillemer (1998) proposed the 'Intergenerational ambivalence model' as an alternative to the intergenerational solidarity model. Ambivalence refers to contradictions in family relationships that are temporarily or permanently irreconcilable. These authors argue that contradictions present in relationships between parents and their offspring and the way ambivalences are managed and negotiated are more likely to be generated in the following three situations: a) ambivalence between dependence and autonomy; b) ambivalence resulting from conflicting norms regarding intergenerational relationships and c) ambivalence resulting from solidarity. In a similar vein, Ingrid Connidis (2015) asserts that 'A key premise of ambivalence is that the ongoing negotiation of contradictions in family relationships is intricately connected to the ways that social life is organized and structured' (p. 78).

Two major orientations have dominated the debate on intergenerational ambivalence relationships. These two orientations understand ambivalences at different analytical levels. The social-structural orientation understands ambivalences in institutional resources and requirements such as social status, social roles or norms (Connidis and McMullin, 2002). The second orientation observes ambivalences at the individual level, particularly the ambivalences in cognition, emotions and motivations. At the individual level, *psychological ambivalence* refers to the simultaneous coexistence of positive and negative sentiments or emotions about family relationships, as well as contradictions between behaviours and sentiments. At the macro level, the *structured ambivalence* attains to inequality and contradictions of structured social relations. At the meso level, ambivalence refers to contradictions in social institutions such as work

and family. The dynamic process of mutual influence of these levels is termed *sociological ambivalence* that refers to the connection of contradictions of individual sentiments or emotions to structured social relations of age, gender, class, etc. The crux of Connidis' (2015, 2010, 2002) argument is that ambivalence in social life occurs at multiple levels connecting the lived experiences of individuals with social institutions such as family, and within larger social, economic and political processes. Thus, family relationships are not solely confined in the realm of the private, but they are influenced by, as well as shape, social life.

Some examples in the literature on grandparenthood have found evidence of situations of ambivalence in family life. For instance, Jennifer Mason (2007), in a study with 46 grandparents, identified geographical proximity of living between relatives as a potential situation in which individuals can experience mixed or ambivalent feelings. The expectations associated with living close and providing childcare can play a role in increasing the strains felt by family members living in close proximity. However, relatives might associate feeling of warmth and security with geographically close proximity. Hence, familiarity and intrusive feelings derived from local and routine contact can coexist in family relationships and generate ambivalence that needs to be worked out in family relationships. Crucially, this study brings into the fore the importance of using 'ambivalence' as a conceptual and analytical tool to understand contradictions between norms and lived experiences of grandparenting, and emphasises the fact that ambivalent situations are a fundamental part of the social life of grandparents. However, there is a lack of research on the ways ambivalent situations in family relationships influence emotional closeness.

Ambivalent situations in intergenerational relationships have also been highlighted in studies on marital transitions such as parental separation or divorce. For example, Timonen and colleagues (2010, 2011) in a qualitative study with parents of divorced or separated adult children found that mixed feelings are likely to occur in situations when childcare is perceived as strenuous or of longer duration than initially expected or as a result of co-residence arrangements of long duration. In another study with paternal grandparents of divorced families, Timonen and Doyle (2012) found that grandparents exercised agency through negotiating tensions and contradictions with the custodial parent using various strategies oriented to retain access to the grandchild

or redraw boundaries in their responsibilities towards grandchildren. These strategies included transfers of financial and emotional support, negotiations of the extent of involvement in the life of grandchildren, as well as acting as mediators between the divorced parents. The authors also identified ambivalent situations arising from the contradiction between grandparents' desires for autonomy and childcare responsibilities, and the ways grandparents exercise *agency* to negotiate these situations, particularly following parental divorce.

Considering the structural and lifecourse positions of grandparents in the relationship with their grandchildren will likely highlight ambivalences in family life. Ambivalence in intergenerational family relationships can be found in the contradictions of structured social relations of age, gender, lineage and generation in connection to individual lives, expectations of gender and family relationships within institutional, structural and cultural settings that create opportunities and constraints to individual action and family relationships such as economic or temporal needs for childcare, geographical proximity and gendered assumptions of care giving. In this thesis, the use of the concept of ambivalence in the analysis of the relationship between grandparental solidarity and emotional closeness with grandchildren responds to the need to add theoretical depth to the variations in emotional closeness that intersect generational, gender and lineage structures. In this thesis it is argued that structures of needs and opportunities enter in contradiction with gender and lineage positions of grandparents, which would explain variations in emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents. However, the intergenerational ambivalence model does not clarify why maternal grandmothers are more likely to have an emotionally close relationship with their grandchildren than any other grandparent.

Family obligations and negotiation of ambivalences

The ways individuals within family life understand and articulate discourses about solidarity and emotional closeness are part of a set of complex processes of negotiation between agency and structure. Family relationships might be laden with obligations and responsibilities in terms of caring after others, sharing resources between family members, helping and making decisions for someone else who is personally, socially or legally recognised and acknowledged as a member of 'kin' or 'family'. The study

of family obligations and responsibilities, however, needs to be understood as fluid and away from morally presented natural ties enacted between family members (Finch, 1989). Finch and Mason (1993) suggest that the process through which family relationships are generated, and obligations between kin and family members constituted, is achieved through negotiations over time rather than extemporaneously constituted by cultural norms and consensually understood and similarly followed by all individuals. The authors focus on the processes by which people '*work out*' family responsibilities and commitments towards relatives, that is, the ways through which kin members acknowledge obligations and responsibilities towards others and act upon them.

Negotiations of family obligations and responsibilities are far from being routinely formalised, but rather there is a plethora of strategies being used, involving implicit and explicit agreements and behaviours varyingly used at different times with the same or different family members. This conceptualisation of family obligations between generations in a family shifted the notion of 'family' from structural relations to complex interpersonal dynamics shaping family ties and obligations based on negotiation rather than rules. However, family responsibilities and obligations do not operate in a vacuum of cultural norms and values of how family life should be (McKie et al., 2005). Finch and Mason (1993) suggest that individuals also operate within moral obligations and responsibilities that respond to normatively informed 'guidelines' of action on the pertinent behaviour towards family members. This refers to the moral and personal commitments in which responsibilities toward recognised and acknowledged members of the group are negotiated in relational terms and over time (Finch and Mason 1993).

The ties between grandparents and grandchildren can be understood through this lens as being negotiated between family members in particular structural contexts. Moral understandings of how the relationship should be between grandparents and grandchildren are articulated in the narratives of grandparents' 'moral presentations of self' (May, 2008). Cultural understandings of the appropriate way to behave might act as guidelines for individuals in social relationships and create expectations about the role and nature of the involvement of grandparents in their grandchildren's life

(Chambers et al., 2009). For instance, in a study interviewing 46 grandparents, Mason and colleagues (2007) identified two broad social norms, the norm of *'being there'* and *'not interfering'*, grandparents invoke when talking about their role and responsibilities of grandparenthood. 'Not interfering' is separated from being involved in the life of their grandchildren. However, the difficulty in negotiating 'non-interference' emerges from contradictions or conflicts with other norms that are significant for contemporary grandparenting; these include norms of good parenting, particularly when grandchildren are young and in situations where grandparents have regular contact with their grandchildren, and norms about the moral value of independence and self-determination. Also, Robin Mann (2007) observes that the norm of not-interfering is the result of a heightened value of the importance and priority given to parent-child relations. The other grandparenting norm, 'being there', refers to standing by until support is requested by the parents of the grandchild. This norm is paired with the norms of independence and self-determination as ideals that are central to the sense of identity. However, there may be contradictions between social norms of grandparenting, but also between norms and lived experiences or personal preferences (Mason et al., 2007). A situation of ambivalence requires some negotiation (Luescher and Pillemer, 1998), although this may not always satisfy the individual's interests or preferences. As noted in Mason and colleagues' study:

'Grandparents have to try to negotiate their sense of responsibility – a kind of moral guardianship – for descendant generations and how they 'turn out' with the conflicting norm of non-interference, often in everyday mundane decisions, and this leads to considerable ambivalence' (p. 695).

Ambivalent situations in grandparenting points to the need to understand the individuals' meanings and how they articulate narratives of the 'moral self' in everyday life experiences and in relation with 'others'. As Ferguson and colleagues (2004) indicate 'being there' is an axiom among grandparents, although there is variability and fuzziness of what it entails and how it is enacted in everyday life. The ambivalence of grandparenting norms also reflect contradictions and conflicts with other social norms often related to good parenting, asserting independence of the middle generation in bringing up their own children and self-determination as the ideal of one's identity (Mason et al., 2007). Grandparenting norms are then confronted with a strong normative significance of providing and caring for younger generations, that

is making sure they choose well for themselves and for their own children. Equally, grandparenting social norms may also enter in conflict with individual preferences or agency and cultural understandings of parents expecting them to be stand-by agents for kin (May, 2008, May, 2012). Navigating through a ‘moral self’ and individual agency shifts the analytical attention back to the ways family members negotiate their involvement and responsibility in each other’s lives and the meanings and significance of these family practices. Crucially, the meanings and experiences of grandparenting are complex, meshed within and confronted with ideals, norms, personal experiences and structured social constraints.

Perhaps unresolved ambivalences in family life have a negative influence on emotional closeness in the grandparent-grandchild relationship. Thus, grandparents negotiate ambivalence in their daily living that shapes the extent to which structural roles and structures of opportunities influence the capacity to enact and sustain an intimate relationship. By contrast, unresolved ambivalences can lead to tension or conflict between grandparents and the adult children and preclude an emotionally close relationship.

Gender and generational aspects of grandparenting

As indicated in the review of empirical research literature in Chapter 1, some researchers have highlighted the importance of gender in understanding variations in grandparents’ contact, provision and closeness to grandchildren. According to a vast array of research the gendered division of labour in family relationships shapes the nature and extent of the involvement of grandparents in the life of their grandchildren (e.g. Albertini et al., 2007, Gray, 2005). Typically, research on grandparenting suggests that mothers and grandmothers are largely in charge of the organisation of social contact and provision of child care and affection towards younger generations within a family as part of kin-keeping activities (Clarke and Roberts, 2004, Eisenberg, 1988, Dubas, 2001). Also, some research has also noted differences in the type of activities enacted by grandmothers and grandfathers with their grandchildren. An early study of gendered practices of grandparenting by Neugarten and Weinstein (1964) categorises the behaviour of grandparents into different styles. These authors found

that grandfathers were unlikely to have a “surrogate” role unlike grandmothers, and instead they were more likely to be reported as “remote” in the ways of doing and “formal” in the relationship with grandchildren compared to grandmothers. Similarly, some other studies have found that grandfathers are more likely to engage in instrumental, sports and outdoor activities compared to grandmothers who were more likely to develop any of the activities with grandchildren in the confines of the home (Spitze and Ward, 1998, Ferguson et al., 2004).

The relationship between gender and grandparenthood has signalled the centrality of women in family life. Some studies suggest that there is a ‘matrifocal tilt’ by which women are more invested and dedicated to a kin-keeping role that is oriented to facilitating and organising contact and exchanges of support between generations within a family (Chan and Elder, 2000a, Mann, 2007). According to this perspective, women attach greater significance to the role of “kin-keepers” and there is a stronger bond in the daughter/mother relationship, which is extended to the relationship of grandmothers with their grandchildren. Similarly, the matrilineal advantage has also been put forwards as an explanation of the distinct opportunities maternal and paternal grandparents have to relate with their grandchildren. Chan and Elder (2000a) suggest that maternal grandmothers are more likely to have a close relationship with their grandchildren given that they are often in frequent contact and have close ties with their daughters compared to paternal grandparents. Little has been written, however, about the extent to which different aspects of the grandchild’s family circumstances and structural opportunities for interaction influence emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents. An exception is Brown’s (2003) study in which she found support for the lineage advantage in the quality of the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren, although this was only the case for the mother’s or the father’s parents but not the in-laws. In this thesis I explore the extent to which there are similarities and differences in emotional closeness both within and across gender and lineage lines. In this vein, I will investigate whether the matrifocal and matrilineal advantage is similarly found in the patternings of emotional closeness with grandchildren, and whether these are influenced by lifecourse events such as divorce or separation. These aspects have been little explored thus far, particularly in the early years of grandchildren.

The refinement of the ways and meanings of grandfathers' involvement in family life need to be examined more closely. This is largely due to the typically held view of grandfathers having less involvement and interest in the life of grandchildren in comparison to grandmothers. For instance, Spitze and Ward (1998) contend that much of this literature has used "gender biased" measures which fail to capture grandfathers' experiences and involvement in the life of their grandchildren. Equally, these authors indicate that reports of grandmothers, parents and grandchildren on who provides help and care might be influenced by gender expectations on who provides help, which makes the role of grandfathers in such tasks invisible to the eyes of mothers and grandchildren as grandfathers are not expected to get involved. In a similar vein, Mann (2007) argues that the experiences of grandfathers are not appropriately captured in grandparent-grandchild relations. More recently, some studies have investigated the masculinities of grandparenting and how these are articulated in the everyday practices and discourses of grandfathers. For instance, Waldrop and colleagues (1999) in a qualitative study with grandfathers reported a "new grandfatherhood" by which grandfathers openly express a strong motivation and inclination to fulfil a central role in the life of their grandchildren by providing care and help. Grandfathers make use of an 'alternative discourse of masculinity' to articulate their involvement in the public field of work and the private realm of the family. Similarly, Mann and Lesson (2010) in a study with 60 grandfathers in Britain found that grandfathers may contribute to reproduce shared beliefs of the centrality of grandmothers in childcare and family issues despite the fact that grandfathers do have an active involvement in the life of their grandchildren. The gendered nature of being a grandfather persists despite changes in the ways of being a grandfather, with grandfathers considering themselves less important than grandmothers and engaging in more leisure-oriented activities with their grandchildren, although they see themselves more as free agents from traditional obligations with which grandmothers need to comply. Thus, according to Mann's and Lesson's study the discourses on emotional engagement in grandfatherhood are not necessarily matched with transforming practices of grandfathering. However, they found that some of the grandfathers enacted a more nurturing role towards their grandchildren, especially in families where the father is absent. In the same study, the

authors found that grandfathers' opportunities for interaction were hindered by work commitments.

In a similar vein, Anna Tarrant (2012) argues that grandfathering is a social relationship rather than a social role with prescribed behaviours and identity. Men's identities as grandfathers are constituted in relation with their grandchildren. She indicates that being a grandfather influences how men perform and construct their identities in later life. Tarrant (2013) states that 'Both ageing and masculinity as intersecting social relations structure old men's practices and various inclusions and exclusions from a range of spaces' (p.197). The study conducted with grandfathers explored grandfathering practices in particular spaces in which they engage with family members. The findings indicate that the experiences of grandfatherhood are complex and diverse, and that ageing masculinities have inherent contradictions that emerge in meaningful spaces. Grandfathers expressed normative gendered differences in their practices with grandchildren in relation to the practices enacted by their wife or partner. Caring practices were distinctly different from those of their wives, which are particularly contingent on the spaces where these take place. This relates according to the author to particular ways of performing masculinity in old age which is drawn upon '[...] gendered divisions of labour established earlier in the lifecourse to justify and make sense of their practices as grandfathers' (p. 200).

Research on grandfatherhood suggest that men's relationships with their grandchildren constitute a significant and meaningful experience of men in later life, and crucially that gendered identities are negotiated and may often challenge hegemonic masculinity. Thus, grandfatherhood is constructed in family and gender practices and subjected to changes in the lifecourse of individuals. Grandfathers' identities and experiences are formed, maintained and transformed in interactions with grandchildren in significantly distinct spaces and through meaningfully subjective practices. In this vein, the intersection of age and gendered identities with everyday experiences and practices of care in a family offer the possibilities to shape and renegotiate previous identities such as that of father in a temporally distinctive moment in the life course of individuals (Tarrant, 2012). However, there is a gap in the study of how grandfathers understand and experience intimacy with their grandchildren through activities in their daily living. This should highlight the complex and diverse

experiences of grandfathering and their experiences of family life and how these mutually shape family practices and gendered practices. Men's identities may be subjected to changes as their relationship with work and family experience changes. The renegotiation of their masculine identities in the light of new family circumstances is achieved through practices of everyday life that construct and reinforce a sense of being and experiencing grandfatherhood.

Concluding comments

The theoretical frameworks and key concepts addressed in the four sections above are employed to shed some light on the patterns of emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents and how grandparents make sense of their family and emotional commitment towards their grandchildren. Drawing on these conceptual frameworks and evidence from the empirical research literature I tackle some of the research questions outlined in the introduction and later stated in chapters 5 to 9.

The 'intergenerational solidarity model' (Bengtson et al., 2002b) proposes a relationship between the different dimensions of solidarity that constitute the grandparent role. Affectual solidarity is identified as one of the key dimensions of solidarity in grandparenting, and can be understood as the sense of emotional closeness between generations. The strength of solidarity between members of a family is shaped by the structure of needs and opportunities for interaction which may enhance the development of an emotionally close relationship. This conceptual framework is used to examine how this structure, and solidarity behaviours shape the perception of closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents. However, this model fails to account for the influences of the parental generation that mediate or regulate the grandchild-grandparent relationship. To this extent, the lifecourse approach (Elder, 1998) emphasises the links between individuals' lifecourse influencing one another's opportunities, needs and relationships with other family members. While the intergenerational solidarity model signals the prevalence of material and non-material transfers between family members across generations and how these shape intergenerational bonds, there is limited scope for the inclusion of co-existing contradictions between norms, individual preferences and social structures. The

‘intergenerational ambivalence model’ (Connidis and McMullin, 2002), however, emphasises contradictions, tensions and strains in family relationships interplaying at the individual, meso and macro level as part of everyday social life. The analytical and conceptual strengths of the solidarity and ambivalence model and the lifecourse approach allow for the understanding of within and between-family differences in the emotionally close relationships between grandparents and grandchildren. Crucially, sociological ambivalence adds some theoretical depth when grasping contradictions between feelings and aspects of gender and lineage in grandparenting family ties. Differences in grandmothers and grandfathers’ involvement in the life of their grandchildren point to gendered and familial expectations and relationships that shape opportunities for intergenerational contact.

This thesis uses these concepts to examine emotional closeness through a three-generational perspective. These theoretical accounts complement each other on examining and understanding how the structure of needs and opportunities for interaction in families, intergenerational solidarity and divorce influence emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents. The involvement of grandparents in the life of their grandchildren is part and consequence of the relationship between the middle generation and grandparents, which may enhance the opportunities for interaction between the non-adjacent generations. However, it is argued that through the direct involvement of grandparents in the life of their grandchildren that the grandchild’s mother perceives the existence of an emotional bond between their children and the grandparents.

This thesis has two major research aims. The first one aims to describe, understand and explain how closeness between grandchildren in their early years and their grandparents is enabled and enacted. Chapter 5 addresses the first and second research questions that explore how the structure of needs and opportunities of the grandchild’s family, intergenerational contact between the middle and old generation and geographical proximity of grandparents influence the mothers’ perception of emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents. Chapter 6 focuses on the third and fourth research questions which aim to explore the link between parental and grandparental divorce or separation and the mothers’ perception of emotional closeness between their children and four types of grandparents. Finally,

chapter 7 looks at the fifth research question which takes into consideration the effects of functional and associational behaviours of grandparents towards their grandchildren and how these influence the variations in emotional closeness. All five research questions explore the extent to which gender and lineage are important predictors of differences in the closeness of the relationship between grandchildren and their grandparents, and whether the observed variations can be explained drawing on the concept of '*sociological ambivalence*' (Connidis, 2015).

The second major research aim of this thesis is to gain understanding of the ways grandparents experience and enact a sense of a close relationship with their grandchildren. It is expected that analysing grandparents' discourses and lived experiences about the relationship with their grandchildren will unveil an array of generational family relationships beyond the mere normative onus of family responsibilities. This strongly reflects onto the idea of family and emotional commitments towards younger generations within a family, and how they are made sense of in everyday life experiences. Focussing on this form of intergenerational relationships emphasises the interpersonal character of family life and departs from a normative analytical perspective which is often oblivious to the varying and negotiated character of family relationships.

Drawing on key theoretical ideas of solidarity behaviours and ambivalence in grandparenting discussed in this chapter, chapters 8 and 9 focus on analysing the ways grandparents articulate a discourse on family norms and responsibilities, and how these are linked to a sense of intimacy with their grandchildren. Grandparents draw on social norms of grandparenting to guide their actions in the relationship with their children and grandchildren. However, as pointed out in the review of the literature in chapter 1 and the discussion of family commitments in chapter 2, norms of grandparenting are not completely straightforward, but rather blurred and open to negotiation. Importantly, social norms of grandparenting may enter into contradiction with other norms, as well as with grandparents' lived experiences. Chapter 8 focuses on whether grandparents experience ambivalent situations in their daily life with their grandchildren, and whether these situations have any effect on feelings of intimacy. Chapter 9 looks at the ambivalent situations that grandparents may encounter in the

event of parental or grandparental divorce, and the ways grandparents negotiate ambivalent feelings in such situations.

Chapter Three:

Theorising intimacy in intergenerational family relationships

Introduction

In this chapter I review the main theses on transformations of intimacy in family life and examine how the concept of intimacy has been conceptualised in the sociological literature. The connection between intimacy and family life has taken a central position in the lives of individuals in contemporary societies (Jamieson, 1998). Albeit with differences in its boundaries, forms and experiences, intimacy is a cultural expression manifest in all cultures (Jamieson 2011). It is not my intention to offer a detailed account of the emergence and development of the concept of intimacy as others have already done this quite comprehensively (see Jamieson, 1998). Rather, I argue its heuristic value in examining, understanding and explaining contemporary family relationships and the ways individuals enable, enact and sustain intimacy with each other, while looking at the links between intimacy and grandparenthood within a family context. This shifts the research scope on family relationships from a functional unit to the dynamics and experiences of building family and intimacy with ‘significant others’. This is particularly important in the context of this thesis as one of the aims is to explain the significance and social meanings of lived experiences and practices of everyday life in grandparent-grandchild relationships that built up intimacy.

Firstly, I explore the major arguments contending a widespread shift in the patterning of intimate life, and its concomitant effects of severing the centrality of family ties in determining intimate relations with others. I examine the theses of democratisation and individualization that point to a large structuring of intimate relationships with a heightened moral ethos on democracy, equality and choice. While there have been some studies assessing the extent of changes in intimate life in couple and parent-child relationships, there is a gap in the extent to which this is the case in grandparent-grandchild relationships. Drawing on materialist feminist research, I critically engage with the processes of ‘democratisation’ of intimate relationships and individualization

of personal life in their shortcomings to account for continued gender and generational inequalities and the significance of relational processes in constituting a sense of intimacy in lived experiences of grandparenting.

Second, I focus on sociologically informed work that conceptualises intimacy as an integral part of interpersonal relationships. I focus on research that draws on practices of intimacy to explore and understand the ways grandparents and grandchildren enact and sustain affective ties and express feelings of love and emotional closeness. To this end, I examine the relevance of dialogical processes as means to *disclosing* self and gather deep knowledge about a ‘significant other’, as well as bodily practices of intimacy and embodiment of feelings of care, affection and love. Also, I place some emphasis on the role of emotions and emotional reflexivity to account for the agency of individuals, particularly grandfathers, in navigating through masculinities in relation to the relationship with grandchildren. I also examine the significance of lifecourse events such as divorce or separation in a family in (re)shaping patternings of intimacy between grandparents and grandchildren. This points to the importance of relational processes and shared cultural understandings within family contexts. These topics are linked to the research aims and questions laid out at the beginning of this thesis, and are intended to provide further analysis and discussion on grandparenting and intimate family life.

The social context of transformations on intimacy

Much of the debate on contemporary transformations of intimacy is embedded within social change in interpersonal relationships and shifts in the formation and dynamics of family life and kinship obligations. Since the second half of the twentieth century new emerging patterns of family living and family forms have been consolidating such as single parenthood, cohabitation, remarriage and childless couples (Silva and Smart, 1998), while progressively these new forms and arrangements have been integrated in people’s attitudes and legal arrangements (Smart and Neale, 1999). These changes in family composition and family life, particularly the rise of divorce rates, cohabitation and single parenthood, have been regarded by some commentators as a threat to the traditional extended family, and concomitantly diminishing the functional and

ideological role of ‘the family’ in society and in the social life of individuals (Gillies, 2003). For instance, Popenoe (1993) argues that as a result of the various social changes in the last three decades of the 20th Century families had lost functions, power and authority, together with a diminished influence of familism as a cultural value leading to a social context characterised by individualism as people are less in favour of transferring time, money and energy to family members and more to themselves. This shift has been interpreted as a clear sign of the imposing secular individualism over family life (Bumpass, 1990). Parallel to this, the ideological discourse situating the family under attack gained relevant ground in New Right Wing politics during the 1980s signalling the demise of the family and family values and the urgent need to recapitalise and tackle the forces undermining ‘the family’ (Barrett and McIntosh, 1991).

Perspectives stressing the detrimental effects of social, cultural and demographic changes in the family structure, family obligations and responsibilities largely hold onto the myth of the extended family as the more functional societal unit for meeting individual needs (Hareven, 2000, Hareven, 1994, Marsh and Arber, 1992). ‘Public pervasive stories’ (Jamieson, 1998) of the prevalence and importance of three-generational families in the past and the almost complete substitution of all extended family by the modern nuclear family (see for example Parsons and Bales, 1956) has been contested by scholars such as Peter Laslett (2001) and Richard Wall (1992) who argued that extended families were widespread in England prior the industrialisation. Similarly, Tamara Hareven (2000), reviewing research in co-residence arrangements in the U.S. describes the long survival of the nuclear family, the “*modified extended family system*”, across time. While it remains inconclusive whether grandparents provided a more or less extensive support to other members of the family in the past (Dench and Ogg, 2002), the idea of a ‘Golden Age’ of the family life that revolves around a three-generational household has been firmly and repeatedly challenged (Connidis and McMullin, 2002, Swartz, 2009, Marsh and Arber, 1992). The tacit acceptance of a unique functional family form has been replaced by evidence pointing to the continued support and assistance between generations within a family despite compositional changes in the family form (Silverstein and Long, 1998a). Some academic commentators have denounced the lack of evidence for asserting that the

extended family has historically been an attestable more functional unit for meeting family members' needs and demands of well-being (e.g. Allan, 1985, Hareven, 2000, Laslett, 2001). Others have challenged the idea of a demise of the family and its incapability to meet children's needs of socialisation (Stacey, 1996). In a similar vein, Bengtson and Roberts (2002a) claim that there is an alarming lack of attention paid to the ways new family forms are satisfying the needs claimed to be fulfilled by the extended family in the past, and overlooking the continuing and growing prevalence and relevance of grandparents in the life of their grandchildren in contemporary Western societies.

Transformations of intimacy and intimate relationships

Social, economic and cultural changes affecting family life such as the increase in divorce, re-marriage, solo parenting, co-habitation or same-sex relationships have been accompanied by novel theorisations interested in 'intentionality' (Sprey, 2000) and individuality as the building blocks of patternings of intimate relationships and affective ties. The now much discussed and critiqued works of Anthony Giddens and Ulrich Beck foregrounded fundamental changes in intimate relationships and family life led by wider social forces of 'democratisation' and 'individualisation' in characteristically reflexive late modern societies. A principle premise in these conceptual frameworks assumes that a new social order coined 'reflexive modernity' has led to a situation by which individuals have choice to construct their self as they are liberated from traditional family roles and obligations (Giddens, 1992, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 1995).

According to Anthony Giddens, profound economic and social changes led by globalisation, and cultural shifts in values and attitudes towards a more liberal mind-set in contemporary Western societies have led to a democratisation of sexual and emotional relationships. The process of 'democratisation' of intimacy (Giddens, 1992) refers to a generic liberation of intimate relations between men and women from the traditional ties and inequalities structured upon family obligations and gender relations. This process is part of a restructuring of patterns of intimacy that have brought freedom to individuals to make their own choices in forming, relating and

dissolving intimate relationships. Within this context, a new form of relationship, 'the pure relationship', has emerged and is characterised by 'a situation where a social relation is entered into for its own sake, for what can be derived by each person from a sustained association with another' (Giddens, 1992, p.58). Importantly, individuals have freedom to choose lifestyles and partners. Within this context, personal affirmation and emotional satisfaction (i.e. self-reward) is continuously sought in marriage and couple relationships as an integral part and condition for the continuation of the relationship. This suggests that the commitment between partners to continue in a relationship exists solely on the basis of mutual self-fulfilment. For Giddens, these transformations in interpersonal relationships have been possible due to the realisation of female autonomy from men on the economic and sexual dimensions. Giddens' (1992) concept of 'plastic sexuality' refers to the uncoupling of sex from the reproduction function leading to a greater autonomy and choice for women to enter or exit a relationship.

Within this larger context of transformations of interpersonal relationships, Giddens (1992) argues that intimacy in modern reflexive societies is achieved through a process of bringing the self to the fore, a notion that implies that there is a "true" emotional self. Intimacy in personal relationships is exercised by the act of partners self-disclosing inner qualities and feelings to each other, a conscious self-reflexive act sustaining a sense of subjectivity. This is possible insofar as there is equality between partners, a situation which Giddens coined 'confluent love' in opposition to the past ideals of romantic love, and represents a shift away from the previous hierarchical, patriarchal and normative structure of marriage and partnership in which choice and self-fulfilment were hardly an option. Thus, 'confluent love' is based on an equal emotional exchange between partners, and in which love is a by-product of the degree of intimacy between partners and a sign of the quality of the exchange of mutual self-disclosure. Within this context in which norms and values associated with marriage and kinship are losing prominence and significance of choice and self-awareness of individuals' emotional needs are argued to be characteristics of personal life. Giddens asserts that 'Autonomy means the successful realisation of the reflexive project of self—the condition of relation to others in an egalitarian way' (p.189). The project of self is a project of constructing a sense of identity through conscious awareness of one's

own circumstances and opportunities for self-actualisation and development. It is an individual process of liberation from habits, emotional habits, that led way to an array of multiple opportunities for being and acting.

The individualisation thesis proposed by Ulrich Beck and Elisabeth Beck-Gernsheim (1992, 1995) signals the decreasing influence of the traditional family structures on the individual's life, and a heightened freedom of people to relate with others. This is attributed to the process of modernisation and its cultural counterpart of individualisation. This new socio-cultural stage in contemporary societies is filled with risk, anxiety and uncertainty as traditional family ties and norms of filial bonds have lost influence in structuring people's lives, and concomitantly caused risk and anxiety in individuals as they meet their emotional needs in personal relationships. Thus, the process of individualisation is understood as a process by which the cultural values of collectivism associated with the 'traditional family' are gradually substituted by individualism, reflexivity and centred on the realisation of a project of self. This is related to a growing demand for autonomy of each member of a couple, which is suggested to be a symptom of a greater emphasis on individualism and one's own personal needs (Beck-Gernsheim, 2002). As a consequence of a heightened importance on the self, there are greater chances of conflict in (hetero)sexual couple relationships arising from uncertainty of one's own biography and ways of relating are more uncertain and flexible. Unlike Giddens, Beck and Beck-Gernsheim emphasise tensions and contradictions arising from individual career needs, the division of household tasks and childcare.

Beck-Gernsheim (2002) advocates for an understanding of the family in terms of the post-familial family. She argues that certainties constructed through religion, tradition, biology, etc. have been eroded and greater possibilities for personal choice have emerged in their replacement with a new set of regulations, pressures and controls. The gradual loosening of traditions as the guidelines for relationships has led to a series of new scenarios in which individuals seek for stability in their relationships. The ambivalence that individuals live in is troublesome and requires a relentless pursuit for stability and comfort. As described by Beck-Gernsheim 'the processes of individualisation generate both a claim to a life of one's own and a longing for ties,

closeness and community' (2002, p.ix-x). The prevalence of the family is argued to stem from a reaction to a more uncertain, impersonal society in which individuals look for refuge from the various risks that arise in this modern social context. Uncertainty and risk in post-traditional societies have led way to a heightened significance of children as a bastion of stability, certainty and a source of love (Beck and Beck-Gernsheim, 1995). This relentless pursuit of stability with the child has led to changes in parent-child relationships based on negotiation and equality.

Critics of the democratisation and individualisation thesis

Giddens' and Beck's & Beck-Gernsheim's theorisations of a generic restructuring of intimacy in modern reflexive societies set the foundations of much debate on intimacy and the extent and novelty of transformations of affective ties (Gillies, 2003). Some commentators, for example, have queried the novelty of the restructuration of interpersonal relationships put forward by Giddens observing and pointing to a continuity in ideals of romantic love in partnerships and the prevalence of marriage as a cultural ideal (Gross, 2005). Crucially, much doubt is cast on the extent to which personal and family relationships within and between generations within a family are democratic and equal, that is unbounded from structural inequalities. As Jacqui Gabb asserts 'structural factors cannot be erased from families as individual family members live within the context of broader social relations that work continually to reinstate hierarchical structures' (2008, p.115). For instance, in a study of parent-child relationships she observes persisting obligations between these two groups based on ideals of family commitment. This can be equally extended to the understanding of the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren in which these relationships are intersected by age and generation structures that allow grandparents to exercise power over their grandchildren.

A central aspect in Giddens' and Beck's & Beck-Gernsheim's theses of changes in intimate relationships points to new emerging intimate relationships freed from social structures and inequalities of gender. However, some commentators argue that while there have some transformations in intergenerational relationships following social and economic changes that characterise modern societies, gender relations have not

changed at the same pace (Kohler et al., 2002, Crompton, 2006). Feminist research has challenged Giddens' notion of 'the pure relationship' and its links with equality, democracy and confluent love. For instance, citing examples across a breadth of research, Lynn Jamieson (1998, 1999) argues that Giddens' central idea of gender equality in modern self-reflexive relationships lacks substantive research on structural institutional inequalities and existing differences of gender, as well as of class and ethnicity in patterning family life and relationships. In a similar vein, Brian Heaphy's (2007) review of Giddens' and Beck's theories draw on feminist research indicating persisting gender differences in the distribution of domestic and childcare tasks despite recent social changes. Women are still largely in charge of the great bulk of domestic or household tasks even in adult couples openly stressing the importance of gender equality (Gabb, 2008). Parenting is a gendered activity in which mothers and fathers have a different emotional and practical involvement with their children (Jamieson, 1998, Jamieson, 1999). For instance, Jacqui Gabb (2008) in a study of intimacy between parents and their children in the UK found that despite parents asserting and seeking for a 'democratic' and egalitarian distribution of domestic and childcaring tasks, mothers often justified the unequal and gendered distribution of these tasks. These generational power differences in practical and emotional behaviour between generations in a family are not only restricted to parents and children. Research on grandparenthood has also signalled gender differences in the practical and emotional participation of grandparents in the life of their grandchildren pointing to a greater involvement of grandmothers in childcaring responsibilities (e.g. Mills et al., 2001).

While Giddens notion of 'intimacy' assumes that individuals have a heightened self-awareness of their emotional needs, much criticism on the democratisation thesis point to differences and inequalities in patterns of intimacy in adult couples structured by gender. For instance, Lynn Jamieson (1999) casts doubt on the notion of democratic and symmetrical interpersonal relationships proffered by Giddens' notion of the 'pure relationship'. Jamieson argues that individuals make use of substantial amount of 'creative energy' to sustain a sense of intimacy in unequal relationships contradicting the principle of mutuality between partners as the new and pervading structuring principle in intimate relationships. Similarly, Jean Duncombe's and Dennis Marsden's (1993) study of love and intimacy in adult heterosexual couples show the persisting

asymmetries in emotional behaviour based on the different gendered social position. These gender inequalities are rooted within socially regulated emotion management and gendered cultural understandings of ways of showing intimacy. These asymmetries in intimate relationships capture the often imbalanced exchange that occurs between family members, and the distinct patternings of intimacy formed between them. Iris Marion Young (1997) suggests that moral reciprocity obscures differences between individuals and it does not necessarily involve a symmetry between self and other in an attempt to achieve moral respect. This notion of mutuality and reciprocity is useful for accounting for 'individual subjectivity and diversity among the mutual exchanges between differently positioned subjects' (Gabb 2008, p. 115). As suggested by Jaqui Gabb (2011) family and personal relationships are often asymmetrical and signal differences between self and other, and importantly asymmetries in affection between family members are not in contradiction with understandings of the other's position (Gabb and Silva, 2011). Acknowledging asymmetry in the reciprocities between differently social positioned members of the family might help capturing relational complexities and dynamic relationships constituted between grandparents and grandchildren, while, crucially, this approach is sensitive to the diversity of relations and their constitutive differences. Ambivalences and asymmetries in intimate relationships show the persisting inequalities in intimate relationships, and points to the theoretical shortcomings of the democratisation thesis based on mutuality between intimates.

Relations of power and material inequalities between men and women in intimate relationships may become more evident in situations of distress, tensions or strains in family life such as in the process of divorce. Divorce or separation might accentuate material inequalities and undermine the principle and ideals of democratisation and mutuality between partners heralded by the 'pure relationship'. For instance, Smart (1998) notes the tensions arising between mothers and fathers following divorce over the custodial rights, and the asymmetrical relationship parents have with their children. She demonstrates that fathers complained about the gendered power dynamics and the perceived distinct emotional relationship mothers had with their children. Similar to the material and emotional consequences parental divorce has for the relation between parents and children, it is claimed that grandparents may equally be caught in the

restructuration of patterns of intimacy between partners following their separation. Equally, research on grandparenthood indicates that grandparents often provide material, emotional and practical help and support to adult children and grandchildren following parental divorce (e.g. Dench and Ogg, 2002, Bridges et al., 2007). Parental divorce may accentuate or contribute to reproduce existing inequalities in generational relationship between grandchildren and maternal and paternal grandparents (Ferguson et al., 2004). This is also noted in the increase of participation of grandparents, largely maternal grandparents, in the life of their children and grandchildren following parental divorce (Herlofson and Hagestad, 2012). However, there are significant differences between maternal and paternal grandparents in the capacity to maintain an intimate relationship with their grandchildren following divorce or separation. The processes of negotiation over child rights between the custodial parent, in the large majority of cases the mother, and non-resident parent, typically the father, may have direct consequences in the patterns of intimacy in grandparent-grandchild relationships (Doyle et al., 2010). This is largely a consequence of mothers being the custodial parent and relying on their own parents for emotional and financial support (Cooney and Smith, 1996). As pointed out by Finch and Mason (1989, 1993) relationships between generations in a family following divorce are more likely to continue if there is reciprocity based on 'mutual aid', a previous story of reciprocal support between women and an active desire to guarantee a contact between grandparents and their grandchildren. This research suggests that individualism is oblivious to processes of relationality in family life that shape the extent of obligations between family members.

According to Giddens' the process of 'democratisation' of intimate relationships has also pervaded parent-child relationships. He argues that these relationships are no longer based on parental authority, but instead they are characterised by democratic practices and participatory ideals. These shifts in parent-child relationships have been accompanied by a growing anxiety over the welfare of children and an onus on their well-being, and has resulted in changes in family communication, which are now more open and democratic (Passmore 1998). Jamieson (1998) also notes that in contemporary Western societies negotiation and mutual understanding dominate parent-child relationships. Unlike Giddens, Jamieson argues that this relational process

not solely as mutual understanding achieved through verbal communication, but also deep knowledge about the other.

However, much criticism has been cast on the omission of power relations between parents and their children in the thesis of democratisation of personal relationships. For instance, Lynn Jamieson (1999) points out that mother-child relationships might not always achieve an open and democratic communication. She argues that despite efforts to enact democratic relationships, parents exercise power and control over their children in everyday experiences. Similarly, Gillies and Holland (2001) also argue that parental authority and control of children's daily activities, choice and information is mixed with a democratic ethos and open communication, but the realisation of such democratic principles enter in contradiction with parental authority and generational power relations. The ethos of democratisation in family relationships has been pointed out to be part of a public discourse that works into the private sphere but fails to grasp the ways individuals in family behave (McCarthy et al., 2003). Gabb (2008) suggests that the rhetoric of openness and equal and democratic relationships is typically expressed by parents and children, but they often reflect the parental preferences. Mothers might articulate a discourse of equality and democratisation in the relationship with their children despite exercising power and control over them through wanting knowledge about the child's activities and ensuring their own continued access to their bedroom (*ibid.*).

Predominantly, studies on family and intimate relationships have observed generational power relations between parent-child relationships. With some exceptions, there is little academic attention to the generational structures of power relations in grandparent-grandchild or grandparent-adult child relationships. One of the few exceptions is the study conducted by Timonen and Doyle (2010, 2012) that demonstrates generational relations of power between the custodial parents and grandparents wherein grandparents have difficulties in drawing boundaries on childcare responsibilities and regaining autonomy from family obligations. Whereas the mandate of grandparents might differ from that of parental control and authority, grandparents are bound by the parental authority and their own norms and rules (Mason et al., 2007, Mann, 2007). The mutuality and reciprocity heralded by the

democratisation thesis overlooks the power exerted by parents over grandparents on matters such as controlling access to the children. So, there is an omission in the literature on intergenerational family relationships in analytically considering the complex negotiations some grandparents may enter with their grandchildren and the grandchildren's parents as part of a participatory and mutual understanding project to build intimacy.

The prevalent social significance of 'family'

Some academic commentators have noted the cultural narrowness of family and intimate relationships devised in the individualization thesis, which obscures the structuring principles of 'family' in individuals' everyday life and interdependences with kin (Ribbens McCarthy et al., 2003, Smart and Shipman, 2004). Brian Heaphy (2007) contends Beck's thesis of detraditionalisation of personal relationships, and the concomitant uncertainties families face. He argues that these changes are not exclusively a new aspect of family life in modern reflexive societies. As such, Heaphy disputes the novelty of detraditionalisation and its consequences on directly diminishing the family in social life. Instead, he points that changes in residences of adult children or issues related to care arrangements have already been part of family and personal life in the past. Furthermore, some scholars contend that instead of a steady weakening of family ties, we are witnessing more complex and vivid intergenerational relationships maintaining bonds between family members (Bengtson, 2001b, Hagestad, 2006), which signals continuity in the importance of 'family' in structuring and patterning personal relationships. There is a wide consensus among scholars of the changing nature of patternings of intimate relationships amid broader social changes characterised, for example, by divorce and remarriage trends. As noted by Bakker and colleagues (2015), divorce and separation of the parental generation may bring about new ways of producing family and intimacy in the daily routines and rituals constituted in the contours of 'the family', as well as the development of new ones. Largely, contenders of the individualization thesis underplay the institutional and societal contexts in which family life is lived and experienced.

The analytical relevance in keeping the term '*family*', as a conceptual construct and analytical framework, rests on its specificity and fluidity, as well as its centrality in the heart of individuals and their experience in everyday life. David Morgan (2011b) claims that 'family' remains important in the life of individuals, and has a particular significance for people in making distinctions between individuals and separating family relationships from other forms of relationships such as friendship. Crucially, he argues that intimacy and personal life can conflate with family, but they typically remain somewhat distinct from each other. The value and importance of intimacy can be associated to family life in socio-cultural contexts that appraise the family as a haven for intimacy (Jamieson et al., 2011). The intersections of family and intimacy and the 'meaning-constitute traditions' (Gross 2005, p. 295) offers point to significant and meaningful interpersonal relationships constituted by and through wider social organisation of ideals, values and materialities of family. Narratives of self-realisation of emotional needs may mask more nuanced and dynamic forms and meanings of intimacy in family life. Ribbens McCarthy (2012) argues about the importance of 'family' in the language of individuals. Individuals relate and articulate the language of 'family' in ways that help them to make sense of their lived lives and relationships with others. She argues that 'family' often entails expectations of caring and emotions and ideals attached to a unit formed by 'relationality' and 'togetherness'. Individuals have particular meanings of what the family ought to do and be and attach different value to ideals of individuality and togetherness. Making sense of the lived experiences of grandparents with their grandchildren needs to consider both the narratives and the assumptions and aspirations held about being 'in a family' (McCarthy, 2012). Edwards and Gillies (2012) claim the relevance of retaining the category 'family' although in its unbounded and multifacetic notion of *families*. This allows to acknowledge the multifarious relationships and significances that individuals attach to 'family' and the ways these are recognised, acknowledged and mutually understood as 'doing' and being part of 'family'.

For some feminist researchers the tenets of the individualizations thesis positioning self as exogenous from the relation with 'others' obscures the connectivity between individuals in their daily life experiences (Smart, 2007, Holmes, 2010). Conceiving the self enmeshed in a network of relationships and irremediably formed and given

shape by them situates self and identity in the social and relational paradigm, while it also emphasises the reflexive character of ways of relating and feeling towards 'significant others'. Roseneil and Ketoviki (2016) indicate a 'relational turn' in theorising the self and reflexivity as partly a contestation to the thesis of individualisation and democratisation of intimacy claiming the demise of family relationships in modernity. They indicate the need to see the self as relational, but instead of narrowing the theorisation of the self to the conscious cognitive and reflexive self, they advocate for the intersection of the conscious and affective in constructing personal selves. Research in this vein does not postulate families as the exclusive site of intimacy. Families are instead constituted by practices of intimacy (Morgan, 2011b). These acts serve as a means to reflexively make sense of the quality of personal relationships. Ribbens McCarthy (2012) signals the analytical and conceptual need to consider the diverse meanings of 'family' and how they relate to 'variable understandings of relationality and individuality. This means that being a grandparent and constructing a grandparent identity is constituted in relation with significant others. The importance of taking a relational stand for the study of grandparenting relationships and intimacy has ground on the pervasiveness of the ways people think, feel and behave in relation and interaction with significant others in the context of family life. This paradigmatic analytical shift moves away from understandings of self as reflexive and detached from others as it is contended in the individualisation thesis. This idea self as relational can be taken further in the study of family and intimacy in grandparent-grandchild relationships. The individualisation thesis offers little analytical and theoretical grounds on the meaning-making processes and traditions associated to family, also it ignores the importance of material and practical interdependences between family members across generations.

Dimensions of intimacy

Love and intimacy are axioms in interpersonal relationships of family and friendship in 'Euro-North American cultures' (Jamieson 2011, p.4). However, the definition of intimacy, its analytical scope and boundaries, has been a contested issue in studies of this particular human experience. Early accounts inspecting intimacy largely

associated it with sexuality, sex and sex roles in heterosexual couples, and typically within the context of marriage, albeit growing academic interest in children's development of intimate ties, and later in same-sex intimacy, contributed to widen the analytical focus of intimacy beyond heterosexual adult couple relationships (for an overview see Gabb 2008). A more recent conceptualisation of 'intimacy' suggests that it is the quality of closeness between individuals and the ways and processes that constitute this quality characterised by 'a feeling of mutual love, being of 'like mind' and special to each other' (Jamieson 2011, p.1). In the next sections I review some of the main understandings of the concept of intimacy as a relevant form of social experience and as an analytical tool for the study of interpersonal relationships.

Intimate knowledge

Giddens' (1992) notion of intimacy emphasises mutual communication of feelings and emotional states. According to the author, intimacy is achieved through disclosing self to other through verbal communication. Giddens refers to this new form of intimacy as the 'disclosure of emotions and actions which the individual is unlikely to hold up to a wider public gaze' (Giddens, 1992). This notion of intimacy is characterised by intimate knowledge about the other, and is associated to an axiomatic ethos in contemporary societies that emotional well-being and intimate life is only achieved through the dialogic mutual disclosure of self in open and democratic relationships. Much research shows that disclosing intimacy through conversations and chats is a fundamental part of intimate experiences (Jamieson, 1999), often occurring spontaneously and revolving around trivial matters of daily living and experiences (Gabb, 2008). However, as pointed out by Jacqui Gabb (2008), there might be topics, particularly related to issues of sexuality, that preclude an open and democratic communication. Furthermore, Lynn Jamieson (1998) stresses that intimate relationships are not irreducibly accomplished via a dialogue of mutual disclosure, and that intimacy may exist between individuals despite the absence of a mutual dialogical disclosure of self to other. She argues that close association with others always bring some degree of knowledge, although it might be insufficient to create intimacy. Mutual understanding or "deep knowing" is also part of intimate life and an important structuring principle of relationships aimed at creating and sustaining an intimacy of

self and other (Jamieson, 1998). This form of knowing and understanding the other adds some further analytical scope to Giddens' notion of intimacy as knowing self and other.

The narrowness of Giddens' understanding of intimacy obviates a plethora of ways and forms of constituting a close bond and articulating and exchanging feelings between partners or in parent-child relationships (Gabb, 2008). Multifarious ways of verbal expressions of love and emotional closeness might not be necessarily or exclusively achieved through self disclosure (Jamieson, 1998). Instead, intimacy includes a large repertoire of practices. Jamieson's materialist approach to intimacy draws on Morgan's conceptualisation of 'family practices' by referring to 'practices of intimacy' as 'practices that cumulatively and in combination enable, create and sustain a sense of a close special quality of a relationship between people' (Jamieson, 2011). Practices of intimacy is a means for exchanging feelings or communicate affect, as well as a way to perform a symbolic role (Jamieson, 2005). This view emphasises that the enactment of intimacy is achieved through everyday practices imbued with symbolic and material meanings that generate a sense of closeness, that is being special and attuned to each other. Intimacy is the quality of relationship rather than an intrinsic aspect of self (Jamieson, 1998, Jamieson et al., 2011). This shifts the analytical attention towards social processes related to enabling and enacting this quality, and also decentres intimacy from a characteristic of types of relationships (Gabb, 2008) and mutual self disclosure. Intimacy might be physically and cognitively experienced by individuals as a unique personal experience (Jamieson, 2011). Practices such as caring after or spending time together can constitute intimacy (ibid.). This also talks to the means to materialise time and activities shared together into a symbolic gesture imbued with meaning and filled with emotions that form a sense of intimacy and closeness (Jamieson, 2005). Allocating time and managing time spent together may work as a means of 'emotion exchange' (Gabb, 2008). Time forms a part and shapes the patternings by which individuals may create a sense of being attuned and special to each other. These practices can also involve knowing and creating mutual understanding between self and other.

Bodily intimate practices and embodiment of emotions

While mutual disclosure between intimates attains individuality –self- and intimacy, this can be complemented and somehow enriched by bodily intimacy (Jamieson, 1998). The importance of the body and embodiment of experiences for enabling, enacting and maintaining intimacy and forming a sense of self and identity rests on the shared corporeality of social experiences in the various multifaceted forms expressed through feelings, gestures and touch. In Giddens' (1992) account, the mutual disclosure of self or intimacy of the self places the body and embodiment of emotions and feelings as part of a cognitive process of articulating feelings. For Giddens, the body is turned into a cognitive process by which the individual makes sense and takes consciousness of its organic being. This notion of the body related to intimacy is understood as an action-system; it is through interactions in the daily life that the body serves a part in sustaining a coherent sense of self-identity. However, this conceptualisation of intimacy is limited and limiting. It reduces the body to a cognitive rational aspect, and is oblivious to gestures and touches and their relevance in daily life interactions for building a sense of closeness between individuals (Gabb, 2008). Giddens does make some reference to the ways the body interacts with the social experiences of self and other, that is the processes by which, for example, the body and processes of embodiment are used or articulated to make distinction and manage the nature of the relationships with others and the boundaries of intimacy and the socio-behavioural and normative constraints of bodily behaviour. Instead, he presumes a rational continuously conscious management by and for the individual self.

The theoretical discussion on emotions has acknowledged the conceptual narrowness and analytical limitations moved beyond the sole cognitive aspect of emotions to include also the importance of bodies in enabling, enacting and sustaining intimate relationships. Deborah Lupton (1998) states that:

'The importance of the body for the emotional self is not simply that emotional experience is related to bodily sensation, but also that notions of the self are inevitably intertwined with embodiment (that is, the ontological state of being and having a body). Embodiment is integral to, and inextricable from, subjectivity (p. 32).

This approach to intimacy extends its conceptualisation beyond verbal means of exchanging and communicating feelings and emotions, and places particular strength on the interdependence of the cognitive and the body. In a similar vein, Gabb states that ‘material bodies do exist through social experiences and understandings of self and other’ (2008, p.82). The relevance and significance of the body and embodiment of social experiences for building a sense of intimacy points to the materialities of the body and the social processes constituting and shaping it in multifarious relationships, experiences and socio-cultural contexts. There are multifarious practices that might create a sense of closeness and feelings of being special to one another. For instance, practices of giving to, sharing with and acts of practical care might build dimensions of intimacy (Jamieson, 2011). These set of practices are often associated with each other and can help generate other dimensions of intimacy. However, practices of intimacy can re-inscribe inequalities of age, gender, generation and class, as well as subvert them (Jamieson, 1998).

The body may also contain information and communicate about the relationship between individuals. Morgan (2011b) argues that one of the dimensions of intimacy is a special characteristically different knowledge of the other, an *embodied knowledge*. Embodied knowledge is a process deeply embedded within life experiences and sharing of time and space over time. This knowledge is also associated with tabooed areas concerning the naked body, typically legitimised, although not exclusively, in intimate relationships. He, nonetheless, acknowledges that not all forms of embodied knowledge imply intimacy. This may be related to generational intimate relationships intersected by gendered social structures. This signals that bodies are shaped within broader structures of power and control. For example, Jacqui Gabb (2008) points that the autonomy of the body in parent-child relationships is curtailed by control and generational authority of parents over their children. Bodies can convey meaning and are used to express feelings, as well as through them that a sense of being close or distant is enabled, enacted and managed. She observes that these forms of legitimised knowledge of the other’s body and touch in parent-child relationships may lead to situations of risk and taboo particularly associated with ideas and discourses related to male predation that configures ‘family intimacy’ and bodily boundaries between fathers and children in terms of bodily touch. This signals that the body is also

gendered and shapes generational relations while (re)configures socially acceptable bodily behaviours re-inscribes bodies in the social. The body is socialised, and in this process of socialisation individuals inflict punishment and set the contours of bodily practices, which relate to structures of power and control. They are also a reflection of gendered and generational hierarchies that exist between ‘husband’ and ‘wife’ and in parent-child relationships. These tensions can also be reflected in the nature and extent of involvement grandparents have in the life of their grandchildren. For instance, Timonen and Doyle (2012) point to the work that grandparents endure and manage to gain control of their participation after perceiving the negative consequences of heavy involvement. There is, nonetheless, a lack of studies analysing how social experiences of family and (bodily) intimacy enable, enact and sustain a sense of closeness between grandparents and grandchildren.

Emotional intimacy

There is a certain academic consensus that emotional closeness is understood as a social experience cognitively appraised and socially valued and recognised (e.g. Lupton 1998). Intimate relationships are saturated with emotions, feelings and affect that contribute to the process of attaching meaning and significance to particular relationships and qualitatively distinguish them from others. The centrality and relevance of emotions in the patternings of intimacy and intimate relationships has, however, received varying attention from scholars. For Giddens (1992) emotions are conceptualised as an irrational component of the self that needs regulation and control by the individual. They are a threat for the discovery of the ‘true’ self. In this approach, the notion of self is a rational self separated from the irrationality of emotions. In Giddens’ approach emotions are inherently individual and separated from relational processes. Hence, there is no room for ‘others’ in constructing a sense of subjectivity, identity and the social. Intimate others only play a part in individual processes of seeking a ‘morality of authenticity’. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim (1995) have also a pessimistic outlook on emotions, and argue that love is an emotion that turns individuals individualistic. These approaches to emotions as resolutely part and parcel of the individual completely disdain any influence of others in social relational contexts in constituting self and emotional relationships (Smart, 2007, Holmes, 2010).

For instance, love has often been understood as an emotion belonging to the individual, but expressing love falls into one among many practices of intimacy (Jamieson et al., 2011).

Recent work on emotions in personal life has pointed to the need to understand and analyse emotions as a relational process. For instance, Carol Smart (2007) drawing on Morgan's 'family practices' approach argues that the emotion of love is something that one '*does*' and '*feels*' in relation with 'others'. The feeling of love is then understood as a social act produced over time by small acts that are given meaning by individuals in interaction. Emotions are acts that serve the individual to make sense of the relationship with others while making differences between self and other, as well as identifying 'significant others' (Gabb, 2008). Importantly, Mary Holmes (2010) argues that reflexivity cannot be separated from emotions, bodies and practices. Within this context the agency of individuals is relationally produced and irremediably involves issues of trust, which is built upon emotions and feelings about and liking of persons and activities. The author advocates instead for an understanding of reflexivity as 'emotional reflexivity' that refers to the process of 'relationally reflecting and acting on interpretations of our own and others' emotions and as describing the way in which emotions are central to how we make our way through the world' (Holmes, 2015).

The argument moves on to the centrality of emotions in everyday family living, although they may not exclusively be part of family relationships. As pointed by Gabb (2011), intimate life in family relationships are filled with emotions. Emotions are made manifest and built in family practices, largely in the contours of the home (Gabb, 2008). The routine performance of activities such as preparing meals, looking after the child, among others bring together aspects of work and emotions in highly routinised activities of family living. The intersections of family living and 'emotion work' (Hochschild, 1979) are made evident in the work of Duncombe and Marsden (1993) showing how family members are routinely managing their own emotions and dealing with emotions of others. Within this framework, emotions are relational, and formed through everyday life activities and practise in connection to others. Smart's (2007) use of 'connectedness' and 'relatedness' is particularly important to situate the crucial

role emotions in the configuration of interpersonal relationships. The role of emotions in everyday life practices is fundamental in Smart's work to understand the links between cognitive and bodily practices. Family and personal relationships are 'embodied practices' in which individuals appeal to emotions to actively distinguish between family and other personal relationships. The interlinking between social processes and relationality highlights the importance in understanding and apprehending emotions as produced, understood and given meaning in the social life, and as a central part of a sense of self and the social world. This view clearly separates from notions of emotions as inherent and genetic or visions of a 'true' emotional self (Giddens, 1992).

Emotions towards intimate others may also occur or be elicited through objects. Deborah Lupton (1998) contends that objects such as photographs play a role in communicating to oneself and others pertaining to a particular social group (e.g. family). Crucially, objects may be used to support emotional relationships between individuals. This approach emphasises the intimacy of the self and the ways individuals maintain a sense of being intimate to others. Similarly, Janet Finch's (2007) concept of 'displaying' families contributes to acknowledging the importance and significance of objects as 'tools' for display. Material objects such as heirlooms may be used to invoke or state one's family and the significance it possesses in maintaining family identity. These objects achieve meanings of characterising and displaying families and family relationships as separated from other relationships of friendship. Carol Smart (2007) also stresses the importance of inanimate objects such as photographs in forming a sense of family or 'doing' family. Extending from the significance objects might have for the formation and maintenance of emotional relationships, place and space are given sentiments by individuals and form part of their emotional selves (Lupton, 1998). Objects are not necessarily or exclusively the bearers of intimacy, but they may be used and given importance and meaning in the processes of forming and maintaining a sense of closeness between generations.

Gender, intimacy and emotions

Early scholarly work about 'the family' emphasised the distinct gendered emotional character of family roles which are functionally oriented at socialising individuals. Parsons (Parsons and Bales, 1955) claimed that in modern societies men occupy instrumental, emotionally detached, public roles, whereas women perform expressive emotional roles characterised by nurturing and caring for the household members. However, Parsons' notion of 'sex role differences' has been widely criticised from feminist perspectives pointing out that 'sex role' ascription ignores important societal issues such as the governing system of patriarchy and power in gender relations within the family (Connell, 1987). Sociological research indicates that gender relations are ongoing and constant productions made in everyday life, and deeply embedded and articulated in families, rather than roles which organise relations based on the individual's position in the structure of the family (Connell, 2009). David Morgan refers to family relationships as 'a process whereby biological signs are given meaning within domestic contexts' (1996; p. 127). These 'biological signs' may refer to gender and age. In this sense, family practices are also practices of distinction, including gender practices. It is important to note that these are largely embodied practices that have implications associated with controlling and restricting what can be done and not, which often come with ambiguities and tensions in interpersonal relationships (ibid).

Questions of gender and emotion have been explored and challenged by feminist researchers while unpacking ideologies and beliefs of a dualism characterised by biology and culture that reproduce ideas of female/male and feminine/masculine (Williams and Bendelow, 1999). Duncombe and Marsden (1998) foregrounds that a commonly shared view characterises women as particularly suited for dealing with emotions, whereas men are incapable of them. As suggested by Lynn Jamieson (2005) 'Gender is a crucial dimension in how embodied emotions are materialised, especially in intergenerational exchanges' (p. 125). Shields and colleagues (2007) also emphasise the importance of emotions in constituting and developing gender differences. They argue that 'doing emotions as doing gender' implies that there is a deeply entrenched connection between shared beliefs of emotions and beliefs of gender, and emotional performance. Within this context, emotion beliefs work as cues in performing gender

and asserting beliefs of gender and gender identity. However, a critique of this position is conceptualising emotions mainly as beliefs and values that one can resort to practise gender-coded emotional values and behaviour, rather than performing this relationally and as a site of struggle and challenge of gender identities such as masculinities in practices of fatherhood or grandfatherhood. Mary Holmes (2015) suggests that masculinities may involve different ways of doing emotionality within intimate relationships. Men in heterosexual relationships make and remake their emotional expression towards their partners through emotional reflexive practices to act and adapt to their own and their partners' emotionalities. While some men feel unease with verbal exchanges that communicate emotionalities, they use embodied forms of emotions such as cuddles and hugs to generate intimacy with their partner. Crucially, this shift to relational forms of emotionality shifts the notion of gender from a static to a dynamic and relational aspect done with others.

As shown in chapter 1, some studies on grandparenthood suggest that distinct shared activities between grandparents and grandchildren depend on the gender of the grandparent (e.g. Cherlin and Furstenberg, 1992). However, Mann (2007) argues that grandparenting studies, and particularly the experiences of grandfathers, have been largely constructed as "feminised", which has contributed to mask specific roles played by grandfathers. While there has been a growing attention on fathers and fatherhood in sociological studies, changes in the roles and practices of men in later life and the relation with masculinities, emotions and embodied practices remain unexplored (Mann et al., 2016). Only with a few exceptions in the literature about grandparenting (see for example Cunningham-Burley, 1987, Waldrop et al., 1999, Mann et al., 2016, Tarrant, 2012), the role, meanings and significance of grandfathers has been underexplored or inferred from the experiences and behaviours of grandmothers.

Mann (2007) advocates for an understanding of the experiences of grandfathers and the relation with hegemonic masculinity through the lens of the life course of individuals. Roles, values and experiences are in confluence with hegemonic masculinities, agency and practices related to personal and family opportunities. However, while there might be changes in the roles and experiences of grandfathers in

later life, this ‘alternative masculinity based on emotion-feeling and nurturing conflates with active productions of “hegemonic masculinity”’ (Mann 2007, p.289). The interest in studying grandfatherhood and masculinities is based on the problematic notion of the link between men and emotional intimacy. This follows that the importance of locating men in the context of family life stems from the ongoing negotiation of gender and generational identities over the life course, particularly in the context of family life opportunities characterised by entering into a new role either as part of ‘being’ a grandparent or circumstantial aspects in relation to family such as divorce or separation of the middle or older generation. In a qualitative study with grandfathers, Mann and Leeson (2010) found that grandfathers construct affective, loving and close relationships with grandchildren and the emotional significance this relationship it has for them. Contrary to previous research that points to differentially gender-based emotion in the relationship of grandparents with their grandchildren, they found little evidence that men feel less emotionally towards their grandchildren compared to grandmothers. The relation between emotion and grandfatherhood is not that of a difference but of negotiation and transformation of “traditional” masculinities. How and why grandfathers might enable and enact intimacy through everyday life experiences and activities, and its connections and implications with masculinities, will be explored by looking at grandmothers and grandfathers’ meanings and lived experiences with their grandchildren.

Concluding comments

Intimacy is at the centre of the contemporary western family (Jamieson 1998), although this quality of the relationship between individuals is not intrinsic in different types of personal relationships, but rather achieved in everyday life interactions between individuals. As such, intimate relationships between grandparents and their grandchildren is understood as a relational, emotional, embodied and cognitive process within the context of families. In this thesis one of the main aims is to understand the ways grandparents construct an intimate relationship with their grandchildren. I argue about the analytical advantages of employing sociologically the term ‘significant’ and ‘meaningful’ together with ‘intimacy practices’ as meshed interdependent descriptors of the quality of the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren; they serve

as qualifiers to describe and emotionally account for 'significant others'. Thus, I understand these relationships as an emotional, embodied and cognitive ongoing process circumscribed in wider family and social life practices over time, and intersected by social structures and practices of gender, age and generation.

The conceptual frameworks discussed in this chapter will guide the analysis of the interviews of grandparents. It is expected that these key theoretical ideas and concepts will shed some light on the significance of social experiences between grandparents and their grandchildren in everyday activities, and the social meanings attached to them. In chapters 8 and 9 I will answer the sixth, seventh and eight research questions outlined in the introduction that set to examine the different ways grandparents enable, enact and sustain intimacy with their grandchildren. The main aim is to understand the personal and social fabric that constitutes intimacy between generations within a family, and the social processes through which grandparents *do* emotionality. It also looks at the intersections of relations of gender and generation that produce and reproduce inequalities through power relations in grandparent-grandchild relationships.

Disclosing and enacting intimacy is not in contradiction with unequal relations; even morally and personally sanctioned practices of disclosing intimacy might act as reinforcing unequal relations. A key objective of this thesis is to examine how gendered relations are linked to emotions, masculinities and the practices of intimacy through which grandparents form a sense of being close and special to grandchildren. As such, I draw on the notion that gendered practices of intimacy are entrenched into cognitive, embodied and relational practices within the context of family life. Within this framework, individuals enact, sustain and adjust to different relational circumstances, and go on to produce and reproduce, as well as challenge, gendered forms of emotionalities and intimacies.

Chapter Four

Methods and methodology

Introduction

This chapter presents the decisions regarding the methodology and methods chosen to conduct this thesis. I review all aspects of the research design including the research strategies and their associated ontological and epistemological assumptions. I address the benefits of a mixed methods analysis and discuss the ways to integrate quantitative and qualitative research strategies to study intergenerational relations of intimacy and closeness. I also highlight the underlying reasons for the selection of particular methodological approaches, the secondary dataset characteristics (the Growing Up in Scotland study), sampling process of case studies, research settings and recruitment process of participants for interview. I describe the steps taken for quantitative and qualitative data analysis and ethical considerations that have arisen throughout the research study.

The research design devised for this thesis aims to explore, describe, explain and understand patterns of intimate relationships between grandchildren and their grandparents, as well as grandparents' experiences of intimacy with their grandchildren over the life course, and the meanings they attribute to these. This thesis also looks at the relational processes that might contribute to the understanding of the ways grandparents enact and sustain emotionally close relationships with their grandchildren through the lens of 'practices of intimacy' (Jamieson et al., 2011) in everyday life. Consequently, it sets out to understand the meanings social actors attach to practices that cumulatively constitute *intimacy*, and the intersection of these practices with practices of *family*, *gender* and *generation*.

The multiple research designs have been devised to best answer the study aims and research questions. To that end, this thesis employs a combination of Mixed Methods strategies, 'convergent' and 'explanatory sequential' mixed methods (Creswell, 2014). I combined the usage of quantitative secondary data (social survey data), more specifically, the Growing Up in Scotland (GUS) study, and primary qualitative data

using in-depth semi-structured interviews. This design aims at providing the best analytical framework to investigate and discuss the ways grandparents enable, enact and maintain significant and meaningful relationships with their grandchildren over time, particularly looking into whether, and if so, in which ways, there are differences in the emotional patternings between grandparents and grandchildren living in couple or divorced or separated families.

For this research I have used the Growing up in Scotland (GUS) study to conduct secondary quantitative research on patterns and variations of intergenerational emotional close relationships between grandchildren and four types of grandparents, that is, maternal and paternal grandmothers and grandfathers. The analysis of the associations between variables is based on the third sweep of Birth Cohort 1 of the GUS study. This sweep was particularly suitable for the present study as it collected some information about the relationship between each type of grandparent and the study child the various grandparents of the study child. Additionally, face-to-face interviews were undertaken in order to gather meanings and experiences of grandparenting, and the ways grandparents enable, enact and sustain a sense of an intimate relationship with their grandchildren.

Justifying a Mixed Methods' approach

The main goal of this research is the study of what, how and why intimacy is enabled, enacted and sustained in grandparent-grandchild relationships. As shown in chapters One, Two and Three, the existing research literature on the social experience of emotional closeness and intimacy in these relationships is scant. Much of the empirical evidence on grandparenthood has either ignored the emotional dimension in grandparent-grandchild relationships or employed it as an independent variable that influences the extent of intergenerational contact and functional exchanges in family life (see a detailed review in chapter 1). Empirical research on the factors contributing to the formation of an emotional connection between grandparents and grandchildren is severely scarce, and only with a few exceptions empirical research has used social theory to inform and guide the relationship between grandparent-grandchild relationships and emotional closeness. However, intimate experiences within and

outside family life is a complex, dynamic relational process that includes bodies, practices and emotions. These experiences have social meaning and significance for the individuals. Even more, they are embedded with, and shaped by gendered and generational relational processes, and as commented on the literature research chapters one major drawback in grandparenting research is studying grandparenthood through the lens of grandmothers' experiences alone. Thus, the endeavour of this study is contributing to the understanding of patterns of emotional closeness at a more general level, drawing on sociological social theory, and the processes through which grandparents attach meaning and significance to their intimate relationship with their grandchildren.

The scope and interest of this thesis, if it is to succeed in its aims, requires a Mixed Methods approach. This is a fairly new methodology in research that has gained relevance since the late 1980s in multiple fields of enquiry such as health, education and sociology, and intends to set a series of procedures for mixing or combining and complementing quantitative and qualitative methods (for a comprehensive review see Johnson et al., 2007), although recent developments have devised research designs combining various qualitative methods for the study of the same phenomenon (e.g. Gabb, 2009). Typically, mixed methods research refers to the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods in the same study including data collection, data analysis, as well as a strategy to integrate both forms of data and particular research design (Creswell and Clark, 2006). Although some debate casts doubts about whether quantitative and qualitative approaches can be combined given the seemingly dissonant ontological and epistemological orientations (for more details see Morgan, 2007, Bryman, 2004).

Mixed methods can be used at different stages of the research design (i.e. research question formulation, data collection, data analysis, etc.). It emerges that this fluidity in the research design increases the likelihood of informing unanticipated results from using one or other method (see Bryman, 2006). However, it remains to explain the unaccounted logic and rationale of mixing methods from both methodologies. This rationale has occupied some discussion in the recent years as mixed methods use came to be viewed as an intrinsically good thing to employ (Mason, 2006). Some authors have envisioned different strategies to use quantitative and qualitative approaches in

combination (Morgan, 1998, Fetter et al., 2013, Bryman, 2006). I have devised and employed an '**explanatory sequential mixed methods strategy**' in which qualitative research follows up from a preliminary quantitative research (Creswell, 2014). However, I have not attempted to use the combination of these two approaches for triangulating as means of verifying measurements. Instead, the usage of these two approaches aimed to further the understanding of intimacy in grandparent-grandchild relationships. First, the use of cross-sectional quantitative analysis is used to explore wider social patterns of emotional closeness between grandchildren and grandparents. This is then followed by qualitative research using interviews with grandparents producing stories, experiences and practices of intergenerational intimacy and closeness between them and their grandchildren.

The steps I have taken in the research process are here detailed. First, I conducted some data analysis using the secondary dataset, GUS. The preliminary results gave an overall idea of the nature and extent of grandchild-grandparent relationships. Particularly, the grandchild's family and grandparent characteristics associated with emotional closeness. Then, I used the secondary data analysis as a sample frame to identify potential participants for the interviews (see details in the section 'Sampling' in this chapter). The secondary data analysis also served to envisage potential topics to explore in-depth in the interviews with grandparents. Finally, there was the matter of integrating and combining the results of the quantitative and qualitative data analysis in order to provide a rich description of intergenerational intimate relationships. Contrary to other authors using qualitative outcomes to interpret or explain quantitative results (e.g. Pluye and Nha Hong, 2014), Mason (2006) points out that when integrating methods, each method and its data contribute somehow to the overall research question, leading to tensions as each method 'does not necessarily or easily build from or into one world view' (p. 20). It is strongly suggested that mixed methods have to be theoretically-driven. Explanation of data findings might be particularly fuzzy and difficult to integrate and interpret. I examine the data across methods to decipher trends in the patternings of emotionalities between grandparents and grandchildren. The combination of cross-sectional and case study data offers a unique insight into vertical and horizontal strands of data. The combination of these two methods is then particularly useful in examining the associations between

variables (cross-sectional analysis) and the experiences and meanings associated with them in the accounts of grandparents about the relationship with their grandchildren (vertical analysis). Importantly, the ‘meshing’ of qualitative and quantitative datasets transcends the traditional cross-check validity of quantitative material, and instead it is aimed at enriching the understanding of a particular research problem (Moran-Ellis et al., 2006). This analytical turn is of particular importance to study how each research approach complements and clarifies the research topic.

Later in this chapter I describe the ontological and epistemological considerations of both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. It is not my intention to verify measurements or point at the gaps of one or other approach, but I see value in bringing the two together as means to chiefly contribute to the sociological theory on intimacy in family life while debunking myths of gendered emotional capabilities. Then, the logic behind using mixed methods in this research draws on Mason’s (2006) claim that ‘mixing methods offers enormous potential for generating new ways of understanding the complexities and contexts of social experience, and for enhancing our capacities for social explanation and generalization’ (p. 10). Thus, the usage of a mixed methods approach to study an underresearched topic is crucial in furthering theoretical construction and its potential capacity for grasping complex and fuzzy social phenomena such as intimacy. Following Morgan (2011a), I understand that family and its extension social relationships such as grandparent-grandchild relationships are multidimensional and touch upon symbolic aspects, emotions, feelings, but also space, time, corporeal/physical practices, imaginaries, ideologies, etc. Faced with this, it seems that it seems over-ambitious to grasp this complexity with one-size-fits-all method by which these practices and elements make sense and are explained.

The research questions for this study address different issues on the measurement and understanding of the phenomenon of intimacy. Each of these approaches offers a distinct corpus of evidence into a social phenomenon, and bringing the two together can help enhance the understanding of it (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). In this research, I have employed quantitative methods to address questions on the extent to which different individual, family, practical/functional and socio-structural aspects influence intergenerational emotional closeness between grandchildren and grandparents; whereas the employment of the qualitative approach has been concerned with

questions on the individuals' meaning and significance of practices of intimacy, norms of grandparenting, experiences, bodies and emotions in everyday family life, that is, the process through which grandparents make sense and attach meaning to the emotional connection with the grandchildren.

In this thesis, the combination of the above-mentioned methods has provided me with a multidimensional approach and research focus yielding rich data on intergenerational intimacy between grandparents and grandchildren. The justification of the chosen methods for this PhD responds to a strategy to optimise the matching between the method and research questions. This strategy differs from the rigid canon of philosophical coherence based on the epistemological stand and the research methods associated with it. Survey research data helped in finding regularities and generalising patterns of emotional closeness across and within families, while case studies data obtained using semi-structured interviews addressed themes on intimate life and grandparenting through collecting personal experiences. The combination of these two methods produced a rich account of patterns and meanings of intergenerational emotional closeness between grandparents and grandchildren. It foregrounded the effects of individual, family and structural characteristics in families on the patternings of emotional closeness, the extent and significance of life events such as divorce or separation in families on the dynamics of intimate life, gendered and generational dynamics of intimate life and the meanings of activities of daily life that constitute a sense of each being special to the other.

Research strategies and ontological and epistemological assumptions

This section presents the research strategies adopted for answering the research questions and the arguments supporting the ontological and epistemological positions taken in this research. While the core of this PhD research is the development of a theoretical understanding of the ways grandparents form a close and intimate relationship with grandchildren, and meanings associated to these relationships, there is a need also to make evident and explicit my views and epistemologically grounded approach on how the 'reality' is constructed and the ways knowledge is produced in society.

Research strategies

The nature of my research questions requires a combination of different procedures for answering them. Theoretically driven research questions about the nature of grandparent-grandchildren relationships and factors associated with building a sense of being emotionally close are used to formulate hypotheses, which have been then empirically contrasted with the available survey data (i.e. GUS study). As such, the strategy chosen for analysing associations between variables, using the GUS study, is a *deductive* strategy. In the process of data analysis new associations between the variables might lead to re-thinking and re-assessing the pre-formed theoretical views and, ultimately, a reformulation of the hypothesis. The addition of an iterative deductive process, a reformulation and re-testing of hypothetically-theory driven relations, was deemed better suited for answering the research questions regarding individual, family and social effects on the formation of an emotionally close relationship between generations in the family.

Alternatively, individuals' accounts of the particular phenomenon of interest in this research demands a more open, flexible strategy that allows both drawing upon pre-figured conceptual and analytical categories and being overt in developing new concepts and categories that might emerge in the process of collecting and analysing interview data. To this end, I adopted an *Abductive* research strategy. As such, this research strategy aims at 'uncovering the largely tacit, mutual knowledge, the symbolic meaning, intentions and rules, which provide the orientations for their [social actors] actions' (Blaikie, 2009, p.89). The individuals' experiences and meanings of intergenerational intimate relationships are valued as a substantial source of information of these experiences, and these are used to develop theoretical understanding of social phenomena. Hence, it is in the process of describing and interpreting social actors' meanings and accounts that the researcher seeks for theoretical and analytical concepts and categories that will ultimately build a conceptual corpus for understanding social processes of intergenerational emotional closeness.

Ontological and epistemological assumptions

The chosen research strategies for answering the research questions involve a series of ontological and epistemological assumptions. Typically, the deductive research strategy is linked to the ontological assumption of *cautious realism* (Blaikie, 2009). That is, the fabric of the reality is assumed to have an independent status. A reality ready to be unfolded by the researcher, although with caveats in grasping this reality as the process of observation involves interpretation. While this approach asserts that the social world has an independent status separated from the individual's subjective understanding, it does not dismiss that the centrality of the appraisal of the reality still stands on the meanings and understanding of the social actors on any social problem. In this research, I adhere to the principle of a cautious interpretation of the reality. Yet, I claim that this same reality, the social world, is formed or constituted by the accounts of the subject of the study, the observed participants, and the discourses through which they appraise their social world and the social categories of the researcher about a particular social phenomenon (e.g. a sense of being and doing closeness). Hence, the assumptions about the social world underlying this PhD research differ from the natural sciences in that objects of the study in the social world *think* (Moses and Knutsen, 2012); they are subjects that have consciousness and agency (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). The nature and understanding of '*the reality*', the ontological approach, is that of reality belonging to individuals who construct and place meaning to actions in their everyday lives. The participants' accounts obtained with the method of interview are interpreted and understood as information about the individuals' reality which they inhabit and a product of this same social reality.

The Social World is, nonetheless, not only a realm of the individuals and their cognitive and non-cognitive actions and activities, but also belongs to and is shaped by the observer, who, subjectively, analyses and dissects this reality and the situations in which it occurs by using 'technical language of social scientific discourse' (Blaikie, 2009, p.19). The observation of the reality is understood as a process, and involves social action. The observer, who is an active part of describing and interpreting the data (Blaikie, 2009). Yet, she/he enters into social action and interprets the accounts of the grandparents about the intimate relationships with their grandchildren. Thus,

individual and social categories such as age, marital status, education, but also emotional closeness, are social constructs subjected to subjective interpretations to pre-defined conceptual categories. I make a strong emphasis on the relational, cultural and societal nature of social surveys and the data produced by them. The reality depicted in the social survey is part and construct of the experiences and meanings attached to them by social actors. The nature of the data generated in the Growing Up in Scotland (GUS) study is not independent of the social environment in which is produced. The concepts from which the survey variables are derived, and their associated categories, are part and product of a particular context specific social reality. The GUS study data, therefore, do not exist in a vacuum, that is, there is no independent reality which is observed with a series of research instruments, but part and product of these same instruments, which, in turn, are part and product of the society that are inscribed within.

The epistemological assumptions in this thesis draw heavily on an *interpretivist* stance. This asserts that knowledge is socially constructed through the interpretations that social actors make of the social world. This epistemological position emphasises the situational, context-historic specificity of the production of knowledge while foregrounding the human action and interaction in the production of knowledge. This paradigm disputes the formation of knowledge through experiences only and, additionally, claims that the researcher's experiences and meanings have also an important place in the production of knowledge. The appraisal of the lay knowledge of individuals' everyday life experiences and accounts can be translated into scientific accounts of these realities sharing and interpreting them for the understanding of 'the social world' (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). The researcher and the researched enter into a relation through various forms of communication. Both parties influence each other in one way or another, which highly contests the assumption of a value-free production of knowledge. Objectivity in the various steps of acknowledging and producing knowledge can be jeopardised when researchers enter in contact with the interpretations and meanings of the participants' accounts.

Within this epistemological approach, the *reflexivity* of the researcher constitutes a vital process in the ways of knowing. The researcher needs to be aware of the assumptions and beliefs commanding the collection, description and interpretation of

data. The researcher questions and challenges her/his own objectivity by making public details of the various procedures that could bias qualitative research practice. The researcher senses and presence can be hardly ignored as part and process of collecting and interpreting data, which strive in achieving objectivity and omitting bias. On a more contentious note, this can also be the case in analysing secondary data. Although the relation with the subject of study is absent, the symbolic meanings and beliefs and values of the social world are used to make sense of and interpret the data and the results from the secondary data analysis.

The diversity of research approaches in use for this PhD leads to consideration of more than one epistemological stance. In addition to the interpretivist approach, I reflect on *postpositivist* practices adapted to social enquiry. The analysis of quantitative research stands from a position of *falsification* (Blaikie, 2009). That is, theories are tested against empirical evidence of a reality that is not directly observable by the researcher neither objective to the positions, perspectives and values of the researcher and research participants; hypothesis on the associations between variables can only be falsified rather than deemed true. A deductive logic centred around the scientific method aligns with the postpositivist epistemology. Within this epistemological understanding knowledge can never reach an infallible state, there is no universal truth of the human behaviour.

The characteristics of secondary data rest upon a series of methodological aspects, including a large number of responses from a representative sample of the population, which allows for generalising aspects of a particular population about a specific phenomenon (i.e. statistical inference). The data is often collected by someone other than the researcher for a specific research or policy purpose (Blaikie 2009). Hence, sampling design and questionnaires are decisions already taken at the moment of conducting analysis with the information provided in the survey.

Quantitative research approach: methodological and analytical aspects

This thesis uses the Growing Up in Scotland (GUS) survey for the analysis of emotional closeness of grandparent-grandchild relationships. GUS was commissioned

in 2003 by the Scottish Executive Education Department, and has since then been managed by the Scottish Centre for Social Research (ScotCen). GUS is a cohort study, a particular sort of panel study, albeit there are some fundamental differences. Crucially, panel studies follow and collect data from the same sample at different points in time, whereas cohort studies follow and collect data for the same group of individuals who share a similar or the same life experiences within a limited range of time and/or geographical location (Menard, 2008). In the case of the GUS study, the cohort is formed by children born in Scotland approximately at the same time (within a year). Thus, GUS is a large-scale representative longitudinal cohort study following the lives of thousands of children born in Scotland, and their families, from early ages and throughout their childhood. The survey collects information on a large range of topics such as cognitive, social, emotional and behavioural development of the sample child, but also collects information on parents' socio-demographic characteristics and grandparental involvement with children. In addition, this study has also been used as the sample frame for the selection of cases for conducting qualitative research. I will first provide an account of the reasons underlying the choice of the GUS dataset and the various methodological decisions and steps taken during the research.

Justification and strengths for choosing GUS

Two main arguments emerge in justifying GUS as the source of data for this thesis. First, it is a Scottish-based study that follows the life of children over time from the early ages through early childhood. It contains information on the type and level of involvement of their grandparents, as well as the children's family life circumstances. The unique focus of GUS on the lives of babies and young children living in Scotland equips the researcher with a rich representative sample of the population to investigate patterns of intergenerational relationships between grandchildren and grandparents. However, the analysis in this thesis was limited to the third sweep of the Birth Cohort given that this was the only sweep out of the first six available at the time of analysis that collected information on emotional closeness individually for each of the sample child's grandparents.

The second reason is that GUS asks participants for consent to be contacted for follow-up studies. This is an advantage for a mixed methods research design in which the quantitative analysis is further elaborated with the findings from the qualitative analysis. As such, GUS allows contact to be made with individuals who have given permission for follow-up studies, which provides a unique opportunity to link macro and micro perspectives and enhance the validity of the analysed variables and bolsters the strength of the findings. It is important to note, however, that the GUS study is not centred on the life of grandparents or older people who are likely to be grandparents, but it rather collects information about children and their family circumstances provided by the child's main carer. This partly limits the scope of the research on intergenerational relationships, particularly in the lack of reporting emotional closeness with children from the grandparents' perspective.

Limitations of the GUS study

Working with secondary survey data may have, however, a series of disadvantages. Using a large, established survey involves having to accept that it is not designed for your study in particular, and therefore some of your research needs will not be met by its data. This might be due to the lack of collection of specific data relevant to the research, or intermittent collection of variables for multiple sweeps and/or restricted collection of dimensions of the variables. The principal example of these limitations is the data for the dependent variable of emotional closeness of children with their grandparents. Although GUS collects information on the total number of grandparents perceived as being close to the study child for various sweeps, only sweep 3 contains specific information about closeness to each of the child's grandparents. Additionally, this variable is a binary outcome rather than an ordinal variable with several categories reporting on the gradient of perceived emotional closeness. Hence, a single variable reporting on a complex phenomenon such as emotional closeness can render problems of error; specifically errors of measurement might take a toll in measures of association with predictive variables.

Another disadvantage of using GUS is that it is not designed to specifically study grandparents' lives, although it collects information on the extent and nature of the relationship between the study child and each type of grandparents. GUS has different

research aims and is designed to investigate in great detail the changing circumstances and development of children throughout their life. This includes the collection of information about the grandparents of the study child, although the richness of information on the children's relationships with their grandparents is little compared to health and well-being circumstances and behaviours.

Also, panel or cohort studies are subjected to *attrition*, that is, individuals might die or lose interest or move away, which reduces the number of cases in the survey across time. In this type of study there is no replacement of cases, which elicits some loss of variation between periods derived from the missing data. Common problems of attrition include the reduction of cases in the sample, which results in problems of validity of data. Also, attrition is often not a random phenomenon, some individuals with particular characteristics are more likely to drop out of studies than others (see details in the 'non-response weights' section). These two aspects have a direct effect on producing valid estimates of the population.

Finally, one last limitation of the GUS study is that data might suffer from recall bias, particularly for events that occurred long before the date of the interview. Individuals then might have difficulties in accurately reporting information about a past event, which can either result in inaccurate or missing information.

Sampling

The sample of population in the GUS study was drawn from the Child Benefit Records (sampling frame). The sampling frame of eligible children was stratified into different levels of strata; first, an area-level sample frame was created by aggregating Data Zones³. Data zones are small output areas created for the Scottish Executive covering the whole of Scotland. Secondly, Data Zones were aggregated in order to achieve an average of 57 births per area per year⁴. This decision was made to ensure enough cases in each of the sample points or *stratum*. Thirdly, each final aggregated area was sorted by Local Authority and the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation Score, resulting in the final 130 sample points. Children in the Birth Cohort 1, the survey used for

³ For more information, visit: <http://www.sns.gov.uk>

⁴ Data collected for each Data zone from the previous 3 years before the survey

analysis, were randomly selected in each of these areas. Sampling was undertaken on a monthly basis between 1st June 2004 and 1st May 2005. Only one child per household was selected; in case of twins the selected child was randomly selected with ½ probability (Anderson et al. 2007). For the Birth Cohort there were a total of 8,218 eligible children. Of those 6,583 were achievable or in scope. In the end, the total number of achieved interviews was 5,217 (80% as % of all in scope).

Data collection

The GUS study data was obtained through face-to-face interviews at the home of the participants using the Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI). This method of data collection improves data quality by reducing errors and inconsistencies in the data and offers advantages over pen-and-paper methods; the interviewer enters the questions directly into a laptop (Leeuw, 2008). At each sweep the interviewer went to the home of the sampled child and interviewed the person who identified herself/himself as the main carer of the study child. However, at sweep 1, the mothers of the study child were targeted for interview in order to collect information on childbirth and breastfeeding. The interviewee was questioned on matters such as the socio-demographic characteristics of the parents of the study child, child's contact, geographical proximity, frequency of shared activities and emotional closeness with the child's grandparents. The large bulk of questions are closed questions divided into various modules according to topic. However, it also includes some open questions that allowed the interviewer to insert the answer as text. In addition, some sweeps included a brief self-complete questionnaire.

Sweep 7 of Birth Cohort 1 has been completed, but not yet released at the time of writing this PhD. Although sweeps 1, 3 and 6 of Birth Cohort 1 contain information about the child's grandparents, only sweep 3 collected relevant data about the emotional connection between the sample child and each of her/his grandparents. It is worth noting that the data on intergenerational relationships including the personal feeling of emotional closeness are captured through the mothers' perceptions, rather than directly from the child or the grandparent.

Attrition and missing data

A common feature of longitudinal survey designs is the variation from one period to the next due to cases (e.g. individuals or households) dropping out of the survey. The response rates may vary between measurement periods (yearly basis in the case of GUS) as a consequence of *attrition* of cases -individuals in the GUS survey-. Attrition may respond to several reasons such as death, loss of interest to participate or moving out of the country. Attrition in the Birth Cohort 1 of the GUS survey is relatively low. In sweep 3, the response rate was as high as 80% of all cases achieved in sweep 1 (Corbett et al., 2009).

One of the major problems with attrition is that it is seldom random, and affects certain groups of the population more than others. For example, in sweep 3 non-response characteristics were identified with: families who rent from a private landlord, individuals of an ethnic background other than white, parent or carer who is not working, mothers aged younger than 25 and mothers who did not breastfeed (Corbett et al., 2009). Crucially, attrition by non-response can be problematic as it affects the representativeness of the population.

Missing data or item non-response is particularly problematic for estimating unbiased estimates of the population. It is relatively common that surveys contain missing information for one or more variables. The source of missingness include interviewees' refusal to answer the question, errors in registering or coding the information, or omission by design among many others. Item non-response can jeopardise the quality of the data, including the analysis due to the reduction of data that directly affects the representativeness of the sample, and, consequently, the validity of the estimates acquired in the analysis. The loss of information derived from item non-response can then be the source of error. Item non-response is rarely completely at random, but rather missing data on variables are correlated with other variables (Hardy and Bryman, 2004). The relevance of acknowledging this is that a procedure to deal with missing data is to drop all cases that have missing information on any of the variables included in the model, known as *casewise deletion*. This procedure reduces the sample size and risks calculation biased estimates of the parameters of the population (Treiman, 2009). There are procedures to impute missing

data that allow circumventing the problem of dropping cases with any missing data on the variables. Sensitive issues or issues perceived by the respondents as intruding onto their privacy are particularly problematic. Among the problematic issues are that of income or wealth questions.

In sweep 3 of the BC1, each variable included in the models was first scrutinised to detect the type of missing data, whether it is completely at random or there is an underlying association between variables with missing data. After careful examination of the variables, the four different analytic samples contained less than 3% of missing cases from the sample in scope. Missing cases in any of the variables included in the multivariate analysis, the analytic sample, were removed using *casewise deletion*.

Weighting

Sample weights are generally calculated in national population surveys and are used to derive unbiased estimates of population characteristics (Winship and Radbill, 1994), and also to correct the standard deviation for the clustering in the sampling strategy. Estimating parameters of the population without taking into account the design effects of a sample, that is to assume that cases have been selected using simple random sampling, may result in inaccurate standard errors. Sample weights allocate to ‘sampling units’ different probabilities of being selected (always positive and non-zero). These weights take account of the sampling design of the survey, attrition and non-response, which enable the making of estimates from the survey data that are more representative of the population.

A caveat of weights is that while they are particularly useful to correct for response bias, although not for response bias within a question, they do not supply information for families with little response rates in the first place. Response bias is, typically, not random and has a larger effect among families with a low economic and educational background. Thus, intergenerational relationships in these families might not be accurately represented in the survey creating dissonances between the true population and the surveyed population.

The GUS study includes different weights for each of the sweeps. I here provide an overview of the weights that have been applied to the survey data to conduct statistical analysis:

Design weights

Selection weights for twins and multiple cohort households were calculated for the Birth Cohort 1 of the GUS study. The selection weights correct for the differential selection probabilities of children living in households where more than one child was eligible. There were 225 households in total with more than one child either in the same cohort or in different cohorts. In households with more than one child in the same cohort, each child had the same probability of being selected. In households with children in different cohorts, older children had a smaller chance of being selected.

Cross-sectional and longitudinal weights

Sweep 3 has two sets of weights. The first set of weights is cross-sectional weights (Sample A+B). The second set of weights is longitudinal exclusively for respondents who have responded at every previous sweep (Sample A). Cross-sectional weights were calculated using calibration weighting methods. The calibration weighting method '[...] takes the pre-calibrated weighted combined sample and adjusts the weights using an iterative procedure' (Bradshaw et al. 2011, p.10). It is a method that allows for correcting for any differences due to the differential non-response between sample A and sample B. Cross-sectional weights are applied to the entire population (Sample A and B) at each sweep. In addition, each cohort at each sweep was scaled to the responding sweep sample size, which allowed matching the size of the weighted sample with the unweighted sample size (Bradshaw et al. 2008, Bradshaw et al. 2011).

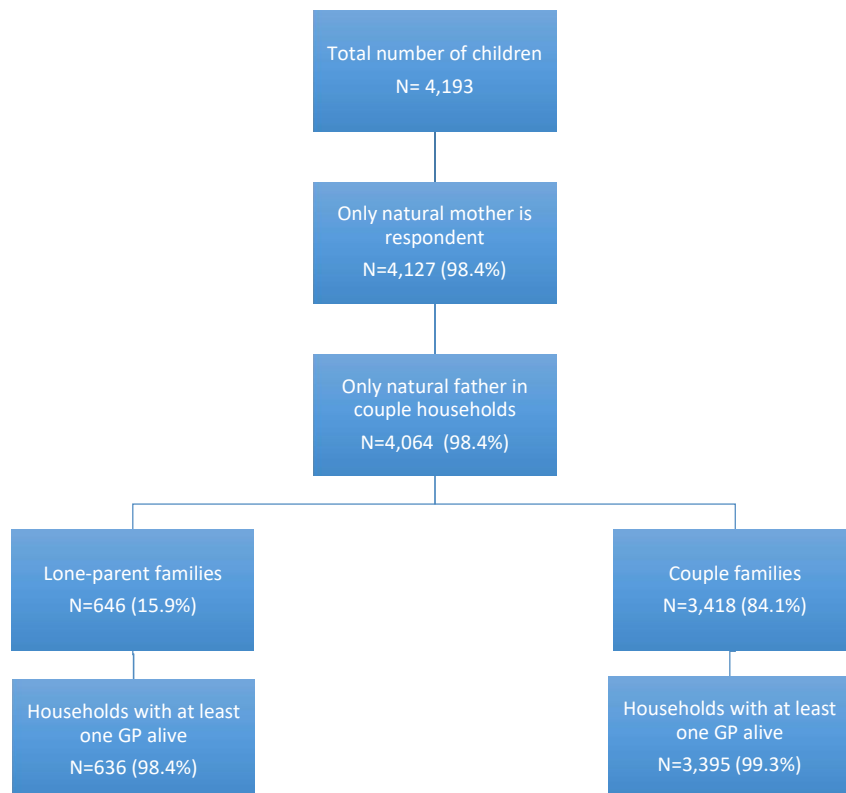
Setting up the dataset

This thesis has used sweep 3 of Birth Cohort 1 of the GUS study that contains relevant data on the study child's grandparents. I here explain the various decisions made in case selection and transformation of relevant variables for the analysis.

Selecting cases

In sweep 3 (2007/2008) the child's main carer, who is identified as the respondent of the survey, is overwhelmingly the mother of the child. In the third sweep of the BC1 the survey respondent was identified as the child's mother in 98.4% (n=4,127) of the cases. In only 66 cases of the total sample in sweep 3 the respondent was other than the natural mother of the study child. For the current analysis, however, these 66 cases were dropped; the rationale behind this decision is to promote maximum clarity in analysing and interpreting family relationships (i.e. references to maternal and paternal grandparents are consistent throughout all cases). Similar numbers are found in the other two selected sweeps. I only selected cases in which the couple is constituted by the natural mother and father of the child. In the third sweep there were 63 cases the father was other than the natural father of the child. In total 4,064 cases were selected for data analysis, which is 96.9% of the cases achieved in sweep 3.

Diagram 1 GUS sweep 3 selection of cases for analysis



Working dataset

A working dataset for sweeps 3 was generated for the purposes of the current study. This dataset includes fewer variables than the original dataset. The chosen variables for the working datasets contain information on the following aspects: children's, parents' and household socio-demographic characteristics, non-resident parents' nature of the relationship with their children, perceived emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents, formal and informal arrangements for childcare, grandparents' socio-demographic characteristics, nature of the relationship between grandchildren and their grandparents. This working dataset has approximately 100 variables from the original dataset.

Operationalisation of concepts

The GUS survey collects information on a wide range of topics about children's lives including the nature and frequency of interaction with kin members. This is of particular relevance for this thesis, specifically the information on the nature and extent of the relationship between grandchildren and their grandparents. Although GUS collects data on a yearly basis, some information on children and their families is collected for some of the sweeps and not others. In sweeps 1, 3 and 6 the interviewee reported on the total number of grandparents who are perceived by the respondent to be emotionally close with the sample child. However, there is only one sweep of the Birth Cohort 1, sweep 3, when the child is aged approximately three, which collected information on emotional closeness between the study child and each of the child's grandparents. This sweep is, naturally, the most relevant for the present analysis.

The following section describes in detail the chosen variables included in the models for analysis and any of the procedures employed to produce the variable used in the models for the analysis of the GUS survey. Some new variables were produced by recoding some of the categories of the original variable, whereas some others are constructed out of combining two or more variables. Importantly, there are a few variables that have been used to derive other variables, but they have not been included in the model as an independent factor. Appendix A contains frequency tables for each

of the variables. The operationalisation of key concepts has been informed by conceptual frameworks and empirical research.

Indicator for grandchild-grandparent emotional closeness

The GUS study collected information on the quality of the relationship between the study child and her/his grandparents. The variables used to construct the indicator for emotional closeness for each of the child's grandparents are described below, although not all of them were included in the analysis. Table 1 provides a summary of these variables, and the new variables used in the analysis. The research questions for this thesis aim at exploring the relationships between a series of covariates and emotional closeness between the child and her/his grandparents. A sense of being emotionally close is an indication of the quality of the relationship between individuals. Although a sense of closeness is a complex concept that might include a wide varied range of emotions, the mothers' perception of the quality of the relationship between the study child and each of the grandparents is thought to offer a good proxy of the added value of the range of emotions and the quality of the relationship between individuals. As mentioned, the interest of the research questions is to test the influence of various individual, family, social and relational factors that might help explain particular patternings of emotional closeness of grandparent-grandchild relationships.

Number of grandparents alive

In each sweep of GUS the respondent was asked to report on the total number of child's grandparents who are still alive. This variable was censored at 10 grandparents, and include grandparents and step-grandparents. This continuous variable was not used in the analysis, but it was used to produce the variables of emotional closeness for each of the four types of grandparents.

Child's grandparents alive

Sweep 3 asked the respondent which of the child's grandparents was still alive at the time of the interview. This is a binary variable used to produce the variable emotional closeness to the child's grandparents.

Total number of grandparents close to child

In sweep 3 the main respondent was asked to report on the total amount of grandparents who are perceived to be close to the grandchild. The variable emotional closeness is a continuous variable ranging from 0 to 10.

Child close to each of the grandparents

In addition, in sweep 3 of BC1, the main respondent was asked to report on the perceived closeness for each of the child's grandparents if not all grandparents were perceived as close to the child. This is a binary variable, that is, only takes the value 0 or 1 regarding whether a close relationship exists between the child and each of the grandparents. The original variable (annotated as *McGclo02...McGclo11*) presented two major caveats for analysis. First, the category 'not mentioned' includes child's grandparents who are not alive. Also, each grandchild-grandparent dyad reported systematic missing cases arising from all the cases in which all the child's grandparents alive are close to the child.

A new set of four binary variables of emotional closeness between children and their grandparents (annotated as *GCLSM* –maternal grandmother-, *GCLSMF* –maternal grandfather-, *GCLSPM* –paternal grandmother-, and *GCLSPF* –paternal grandfather) were derived based on information about whether the grandparent is still alive, the total number of grandparents alive, the total number of grandparents who are reported as emotionally close, and the variable closeness for each of the child's grandparents (Table 1). The method consisted of cross-referencing all the families in which the total number of parents alive and the total number of grandparents perceived as being close were the same. On this basis, when both variables matched in number, each of the child's grandparents alive was imputed a value of 1 (emotional closeness is mentioned). The four resulting variables were used as dependent variables for each of the grandchild-grandparent dyad in the analysis. Table A1 in Appendix A show the frequencies for all variables used in the analysis.

Table 1 Indicator of grandchild-grandparent emotional closeness

Name	GUS Variable	New variable	Variable name
<i>McGclo01</i>	Total number of grandparents close to child (continuous - censored at 10 grandparents)		
<i>McGali03</i>	Total number of grandparents alive (continuous - censored at 10 grandparents)	Closeness to maternal grandmother (No / Yes)	<i>GCLSM</i>
<i>McGwho01</i>	Respondent's mother alive (Not mentioned / Mentioned)		
<i>McGclo02</i>	Closeness to respondent's mother (not mentioned / mentioned)		
<i>McGclo01</i>	Total number of grandparents close to child	Closeness to maternal grandfather (No / Yes)	<i>GCLSMF</i>
<i>McGali03</i>	Total number of grandparents alive		
<i>McGwho02</i>	Respondent's father alive		
<i>McGclo03</i>	Closeness to respondent's father		
<i>McGclo01</i>	Total number of grandparents close to child		
<i>McGali03</i>	Total number of grandparents alive	Closeness to paternal grandmother (No / Yes)	<i>GCLSPM</i>
<i>McGwho04</i>	Respondent's mother-in-law alive		
<i>McGwho09</i>	Respondent's mother-in-law alive (non-resident father)		
<i>McGclo05</i>	Closeness to respondent's mother-in-law		
<i>McGclo10</i>	Closeness to respondent's mother-in-law (non-resident father)		
<i>McGclo01</i>	Total number of grandparents close to child		
<i>McGali03</i>	Total number of grandparents alive	Closeness to paternal grandfather (No / Yes)	<i>GCLSPF</i>
<i>McGwho05</i>	Respondent's father-in-law alive		
<i>McGwho10</i>	Respondent's father-in-law alive (non-resident father)		
<i>McGclo06</i>	Closeness to respondent's father-in-law		
<i>McGclo11</i>	Closeness to respondent's father-in-law (non-resident father)		

Indicators for the structure of family needs

The GUS study collects information for a series of social and demographic characteristics of individuals living in the study child's household, as well for some individuals outside the household. The literature on grandparent-grandchild relationships reviewed in chapter 1 points to the relevance of a series of socio-

demographic characteristics of individuals and family circumstances that enhance or preclude the opportunities of grandparents to enable and enact emotional closeness with grandchildren. The variables described below control for the effect of the structure of family needs that are thought to influence intergenerational family relationships, and altogether effects the child's mother's perception of emotional closeness of grandchild-grandparent relationships. Table 2 illustrates the variables used in the analysis and table A2 in Appendix A shows the frequencies for each of these variables for sweep 3.

Sex of the grandchild

This variable is a binary variable reporting whether the grandchild is a male or a female (annotated as *SEX*).

Age mother at child's birth

The mother was asked at what age she gave birth to the cohort child. The variable was originally recorded as a continuous variable and then derived by ScotCen into four categories. I recorded this variable into three categories. The new variable (annotated as *AGEMO*) distinguishes between mothers who gave birth before the age of 20, mothers who gave birth between the age 0f 20 and 29 and mothers who gave birth at age 30 or older. The cases of children whose mothers gave birth at age 40 or older were merged with the category of children whose mothers gave birth at age 30 to 39 due to the very few cases in the former category.

Mother's employment status

This variable collects information about the working situation of the mother at the time of the interview. This variable is categorical with three categories: full-time, part-time and not working. It is included in the models as a control variable (*EMPLOY*). However, this variable does not capture the duration and transitions of the employment status previous to the child's birth and throughout up to the time of the interview when the child is approximately aged three.

Mother's highest academic qualification

GUS collected information on the qualifications held by the mothers at the time of the interview. This variable is derived from a series of variables capturing the qualifications obtained by the mother over time. It was used as a control variable in

the models as derived by ScotCen. GUS collected information on the education in each of the sweeps; however, this is a fairly stable variable with little variations over time. In the analysis for sweep 3, the variable used was the one recorded for that particular sweep (annotated as *EDUC*)

Siblings in the household

The main carer was asked to report on the number of siblings living in the household. The original variable is a continuous variable capped at 7 siblings in the household. An ordinal variable with three categories was derived (annotated as *SIBLNG*) and used in the analysis. This variable took three different values distinguishing between families with no siblings, one sibling and two or more siblings living in the household. The variable siblings in the household was used as an independent variable in the analysis to control for the effects of competing intimacy among siblings with grandparents and heterogeneity between families.

Annual equivalised household income

The GUS study collected information on the total annual household income of the adult members living in the household. This variable is derived by ScotCen banded in quintiles (*INCOME*) and used in the analysis as an independent variable.

Age of the grandparent

The mothers were also asked about the age of each of the child's grandparents alive at the time of the interview. The age is reported numerically by years lived. The literature on grandparenthood is unclear about the extent to which and under what circumstances the age of the grandparent influences the relationship with grandchildren (see chapter 2 for a detailed review). This variable is used as an independent variable in the analysis. The variable was recorded into three categories: grandparents aged 35 to 50 years; aged 50 to 64; and 65 and over.

Family composition

The mothers of the baby cohort were asked about their partnership circumstances. This is whether the respondent was living in a couple or as a single parent family. The original variable is a binary variable accounting for whether the child's mother is a lone parent or in couple. A new variable (annotated as *DIVOR*) was produced to distinguish between mothers who have gone through a divorce process regardless of

Table 2 Indicators for the structure of family needs

Name	GUS Variable	New variable	Variable name
<i>McHGsx1</i>	Sex of the child (Male or female)	-	<i>SEX</i>
<i>DcHGmag5</i>	Age of natural mother at birth of cohort child (Under 20 / 20 to 29 / 30 to 39 / 40 or older)	Age of natural mother at birth of cohort child (Under 20 / 20 to 29 and 30 and older)	<i>AGEMO</i>
<i>DcMsta01</i>	Mother's employment status (Full-time / Part-time / Not working)	-	<i>EMPLOY</i>
<i>DcMedu01</i>	Mother's highest educational level (Degree or equivalent / Vocational qualifications below degree / Higher grade or equivalent / Standard grade or equivalent / No qualifications)	-	<i>EDUC</i>
<i>DcHGnmsb</i>	Number of siblings in the household (continuous capped at 7)	Siblings in the household (0 / 1 / 2 or more)	<i>SIBLNG</i>
<i>DcEqv5</i>	Annual equivalised household income – Quintiles (Bottom Quintile (<£8,410) / 2nd Quintile (>=£8,410< £13,750) / 3rd Quintile (>=£13,750< £21,785) / 4th Quintile (>=£21,785< £33,571) / Top Quintile (>=£33,571))	-	<i>INCOME</i>
<i>McGage01</i> ; <i>McGage02</i> ; <i>McGage05</i> & <i>McGage09</i> ; <i>McGage06</i> & <i>McGage10</i> .	Age of the grandparent (maternal and paternal grandmother and grandfather)	Age of the grandparent (35 to 50; 51 to 64; 65 and over)	<i>AGEMM</i> ; <i>AGEMF</i> ; <i>AGEPM</i> ; <i>AGEPF</i> .
<i>DcHGrsp04</i>	Family type (Lone / Couple family)	Mother divorced or separated (Couple / Divorced or separated)	<i>DIVOR</i>
<i>DcHGnp03</i>	Natural father in household (Not mentioned / Mentioned)		
<i>McGmar01</i>	Respondent's parents divorced or separated (Yes / No / Never lived together / Never lived with parents)	Maternal grandparents divorced or separated (No / Yes)	<i>GPDIVMT</i>
<i>McGmar02</i>	Respondent's parents-in-law divorced or separated	Paternal grandparents divorced or separated (No / Yes)	<i>GPDIVPT</i>
<i>McGmar03</i>	Respondent's parents-in-law divorced or separated (Non-resident parent)		

re-partnering. This decision responds to the expected ambivalent effects in the intergenerational family relationships following parental divorce as reported in previous work (see a detailed discussion in chapter 1).

Grandparents' marital status

The GUS study collected information on the marital or couple status of the child's grandparents. This variable derived by ScotCen was only asked in case both grandparents were still alive at the time of the interview. As such, it was not possible to determine which grandparents had divorced with her/his former partner if one of the grandparents was dead at the time of the interview. The original variable has four categories, although the variable used in the analysis was recoded into a binary variable. For the analysis it was only considered the marital or couple status of maternal and paternal grandparents (annotated as *GPDIVMT* –maternal grandparents- and *GPDIVPT* –paternal grandparents).

Indicators for social and structural opportunities for interaction

Face-to-face contact grandchild-grandparent

The GUS survey collected data for the frequency of face-to-face contact between the study child and each of her/his grandparents within the last 12 months prior to the interview. A new categorical variable with four categories of frequency of intergenerational face-to-face contact was constructed for each grandchild-grandparent dyad (annotated as *GCONMM*; *GCONMF*; *GCONPM*; *GCONPF*). The frequency of face-to-face contact was originally recorded by ScotCen in an ordinal scale with six categories (1= Everyday or almost; 2= At least once a week; 3= At least once a month; 4= At least every 3 months; 5= Less often than 3 months; 6= Never). Instead, I used four categories to measure the intensity of face-to-face contact between the grandchild and each of the four grandparents: 'everyday or almost', 'once a month or more often', 'less often than once a month', 'never'. Table 3 summarises the original variables and the new variables used in the multivariate regression analyses. The frequencies of each of the variables can be found in Table A3 in Appendix A.

Table 3 Indicators for Social and Structural opportunities and interaction

Name	GUS Variable ¹	New variable ²	Variable name
<i>DcGconta</i> , <i>DcGcontc</i> , <i>DcGcontg</i>	Contact with: respondent's mother and father together, respondent's mother alone, respondent's mother and partner (not mentioned / mentioned)	Frequency face-to-face contact grandchild-maternal grandmother (Everyday or almost/Less once a month or more often/less often than once a month/never)	<i>GCONMM</i>
<i>McGsea01</i> , <i>McGsec01</i> , <i>McGsea01</i>	Grandchild frequency of seeing with: respondent's mother and father together, respondent's mother alone, respondent's mother and partner (Everyday or almost; At least once a week; At least once a month; At least every 3 months; Less often than 3 months; Never)		
<i>DcGconta</i> , <i>DcGcontd</i> , <i>DcGconth</i>	Contact with: respondent's mother and father together, respondent's father alone, respondent's father and partner (not mentioned / mentioned)	Frequency face-to-face contact grandchild-maternal grandfather (Everyday or almost/Less once a month or more often/less often than once a month/never)	<i>GCONMF</i>
<i>McGsea01</i> , <i>McGsed01</i> , <i>McGseh01</i>	Grandchild frequency of seeing with: respondent's mother and father together, respondent's father alone, respondent's father and partner		
<i>DcGcontb</i> , <i>DcGcontc</i> , <i>DcGconti</i> , <i>DcGcontk</i> , <i>DcGcontl</i> , <i>DcGcontn</i>	Contact with: respondent's partner's mother and father together, respondent's mother alone, respondent's mother and partner; non-resident's respondent's partner's mother and father together, alone and mother with partner (not mentioned / mentioned)	Frequency face-to-face contact grandchild-paternal grandmother (Everyday or almost/Less once a month or more often/less often than once a month/never)	<i>GCONPM</i>
<i>McGseb01</i> , <i>McGsee01</i> , <i>McGsei01</i> , <i>McGsek01</i> , <i>McGsel01</i> , <i>McGsen01</i>	Grandchild frequency of seeing with: partner's mother and father together, respondent's mother alone, respondent's mother and partner; non-resident's respondent's partner's mother and father together, alone and mother with partner		
<i>DcGcontb</i> , <i>DcGcontf</i> , <i>DcGcontj</i> , <i>DcGcontk</i> , <i>DcGcontm</i> , <i>DcGconto</i>	Contact with: respondent's partner's mother and father together, respondent's father alone, respondent's father and partner; non-resident's respondent's partner's mother and father together, alone and father with partner (not mentioned / mentioned)	Frequency face-to-face contact grandchild-paternal grandfather (Everyday or almost/Less once a month or more)	<i>GCONPF</i>

<i>McGseb01</i> , <i>McGsef01</i> , <i>McGsej01</i> , <i>McGsek01</i> , <i>McGsem01</i> , <i>McGseo01</i>	Grandchild frequency of seeing with: partner's mother and father together, respondent's mother alone, respondent's mother and partner; non-resident's respondent's partner's mother and father together, alone and mother with partner	often/less often than once a month/never)	
<i>McGcliv01</i> <i>McGali03</i> <i>McGwho01</i> <i>McGliv02</i>	Total number of grandparents geographically close (continuous - censored at 10 grandparents) Total number of grandparents alive (continuous - censored at 10 grandparents) Respondent's mother alive (Not mentioned / Mentioned) Respondent's mother geographically close (not mentioned / mentioned)	Maternal grandmother living geographically close (No / Yes)	<i>PROXMM</i>
<i>McGcliv01</i> <i>McGali03</i> <i>McGwho02</i> <i>McGliv03</i>	Total number of grandparents geographically close Total number of grandparents alive Respondent's father alive Respondent's father geographically close	Maternal grandfather living geographically close (No / Yes)	<i>PROXMF</i>
<i>McGcliv01</i> <i>McGali03</i> <i>McGwho05</i> <i>McGliv06</i>	Total number of grandparents geographically close Total number of grandparents alive Respondent's mother-in-law alive Respondent's mother-in-law geographically close	Paternal grandmother living geographically close (No / Yes)	<i>PROXPM</i>
<i>McGcliv01</i> <i>McGali03</i> <i>McGwho06</i> <i>McGliv07</i>	Total number of grandparents geographically close Total number of grandparents alive Respondent's father-in-law alive Respondent's father-in-law geographically close	Paternal grandfather living geographically close (No / Yes)	<i>PROXPF</i>

1: Same categories for all the variables.

2: Same categories for all the variables.

Geographical proximity of living

The main caregiver was asked to report on the total number of child's grandparents who live within 20-30-minute drive from the child's residence. This is a continuous variable capped at 10 grandparents. If not all grandparents alive were living geographically close, the respondent was asked to report for each grandparent individually. A new set of variables for each of the four types of grandparents included

in the analyses were produced combining the information of the two original variables on geographical proximity together with the total number of grandparents alive and whether each grandparent is alive. Table 3 provides full details of the new variables for each of the four types of grandparents used in the analysis (annotated as PROXMM –maternal grandmother-; PROXMF –maternal grandfather-; PROXPM –paternal grandmother-; and PROXPF –paternal grandfather).

Indicators for the shared activities between grandchildren and grandparents

In the GUS survey, the interviewee was asked about several ways the grandparents provide some practical help or support to the family, of which the following were included in the analysis: looking after the child for one hour or more a day; babysitting the child during the evening; have the child to stay overnight; take child on outings or daytrips. The frequency of each of these activities was recorded in an ordinal scale with six categories (1= Everyday or almost; 2= At least once a week; 3= At least once a month; 4= At least every 3 months; 5= Less often than 3 months; 6= Never) rather than per days, weeks, months. Most research literature reviewed in chapter 1 identified grandparental support as a key aspect of grandparenting, and a way through which grandparents derive meaning of their role and the relationship with grandchildren. However, little research has explored the links between grandparental involvement in the life of grandchildren and the enactment of a sense of emotional closeness.

These variables are dimensions of grandparenting that might enact feelings of emotional closeness between grandchildren and grandparents. Proponents of the intergenerational solidarity model conceive these activities as dimensions of family solidarity that foster family cohesion and influence other dimensions of grandparenting such as affectual ties (Bengtson, 2001b). However, this approach has little consideration for the material conditions and structures of family relationships. The feminist research literature has pointed to the gendered division of care in the family (Connell, 1987). The gender division of labour has structural consequences on the gendered practices and obligations of family members including grandparents. It is then expected that grandmothers will look after grandchildren more regularly than grandfathers. However, the influence or effect of looking after grandchildren on the

Table 4: Indicators for the structure of opportunities for interaction

Name	GUS Variable ¹	New variable ²	Variable name
<i>McGspa01</i> + <i>McGspc01</i>	Frequency of respondent's mother and father (together) and mother (alone) looking after the child (Everyday or almost / At least once a week / At least once a month / At least once every 3 months / Less than every 3 months / Never)	Frequency of maternal grandmother looking after the child (Frequently / Rarely / Never)	<i>LOOKMM</i>
<i>McGspa02</i> + <i>McGspc02</i>	Frequency of respondent's mother and father (together) and mother (alone) babysitting the child	Frequency of maternal grandmother babysitting the child	<i>BSTMM</i>
<i>McGspa04</i> + <i>McGspc04</i>	Frequency of respondent's mother and father (together) and mother (alone) going on outings with the child	Frequency of maternal grandmother going on outings with the child	<i>OUTMM</i>
<i>McGspa01</i> + <i>McGspd01</i>	Frequency of respondent's mother and father (together) and father (alone) looking after the child	Frequency of maternal grandfather looking after the child	<i>LOOKMF</i>
<i>McGspa02</i> + <i>McGspd02</i>	Frequency of respondent's mother and father (together) and father (alone) babysitting the child	Frequency of maternal grandfather babysitting the child	<i>BSTMF</i>
<i>McGspa04</i> + <i>McGspd04</i>	Frequency of respondent's mother and father (together) and father (alone) going on outings with the child	Frequency of maternal grandfather going on outings with the child	<i>OUTMF</i>
<i>McGspb01</i> + <i>McGspd01</i>	Frequency of respondent's partner's mother and father (together) and father (alone) looking after the child	Frequency of maternal grandmother looking after the child	<i>LOOKPM</i>
<i>McGspb02</i> + <i>McGspd02</i>	Frequency of respondent's partner's mother and father (together) and father (alone) babysitting the child	Frequency of maternal grandmother babysitting the child	<i>BSTPM</i>

<i>McGspb04 + McGspd04</i>	Frequency of respondent's partner's mother and father (together) and father (alone) going on outings with the child	Frequency of paternal grandmother going on outings with the child	<i>OUTPM</i>
<i>McGspb01 + McGspd01</i>	Frequency of respondent's partner's mother and father (together) and father (alone) looking after the child	Frequency of paternal grandfather looking after the child	<i>LOOKMF</i>
<i>McGspb02 + McGspd02</i>	Frequency of respondent's partner's mother and father (together) and father (alone) babysitting the child	Frequency of paternal grandfather babysitting the child	<i>BSTMF</i>
<i>McGspb04 + McGspd04</i>	Frequency of respondent's partner's mother and father (together) and father (alone) going on outings with the child	Frequency of paternal grandfather going on outings with the child	<i>OUTMF</i>

1: Same categories for all the variables.

2: Same categories for all the variables.

development and sustainment of emotionally close relationships is far from straightforward. First, differential participation in childcare tasks between men and women might be based on differently gendered expectations and practices. In turn, a frequent engagement of grandfathers in the life of their grandchildren can be perceived by the parents as a greater emotional and practical commitment that surpasses gendered expectations of grandfatherhood. Second, these dimensions of intergenerational solidarity can trigger negative sentiments and strains in the grandparent-parent and grandparent-grandchild relationships. A sense of being overburdened with family obligations might have the opposite effect of developing a feeling of closeness (Timonen and Doyle, 2012). The intergenerational solidarity model emphasises a dichotomy between the presence or absence of solidarity in family relationships. However, Connidis and MacMullin (2002), highlighting concerns about the normative underpinnings of this approach, further propose the use of ‘intergenerational ambivalence’ to include mutually coexisting positive and negative sentiments in solidary family relationships. As the authors articulate it, ‘ambivalence’ is a term which involves tensions between personal preferences and structural conditions. Chapter 7 will closely explore the influence of these activities on the child’s mother’s perception of emotional closeness of grandchild-grandparent relationships.

It is important to note that each of these activities were asked about retrospectively, which may lead to recall bias. Crucially, the interviewee was prompted to think about the frequency the grandparents did each of these activities with the sample child in the past 12 months. However, in sweep 3 the respondents were asked to report on these activities for each ‘set’ of the child’s grandparents rather than individually, except if the grandparent was a lone grandparent. Also, these questions were only asked provided the grandparents had contact with the family or child. To remedy these caveats, I derived a series of new variables for each of the activities separated by each grandparent using the new variables of intergenerational contact described above (*CONMM, etc.*). In order to keep as many cases as possible in the models, those mothers who indicated a lack of any kind of contact with the grandparent were imputed to the category “never” in the new variable measuring the frequency of each of the

three activities. However, given the way the questions were asked, the variables on the frequency in which grandparents are unable to capture the extent to which each grandparent in a couple contribute to the actual provision of help or support. Thus, both grandparents who live in a couple are inferred the same amount of involvement, which disregards possible variations in child care within grandparent couples.

Also, the three selected variables of shared activities of daily living between grandchildren and grandparents were recorded into fewer categories than in the original variables. This decision responds to the fact that the richer amount of information led to higher likelihood of zero count cells in bivariate analysis, and, consequently, the impossibility to predict a value in the multivariate regression models. Instead, I used three categories to measure the intensity of each of these activities: frequently, rarely, never. Table 2 summarises the recording of the three variables and the annotated name of the variable for grandmothers and grandfathers of the maternal and paternal side, and the frequencies for the new variables can be found in Table A4 in Appendix A.

Methods for statistical analysis

Initially, this thesis was expected to make use of the longitudinal characteristics of the GUS study to explore family transitions over time and their effects on the odds of grandchildren being emotionally close to their grandparents. It was anticipated that changes in the composition of the family would help to predict transformations in the closeness of the relationship between generations in the family. Fixed and random effects in the regression models are indicated to study variations within cases while adjusting for continuities between cases. Nonetheless, as mentioned in the limitations of the GUS study, the data on emotional closeness between grandparents and grandchildren is only collected for one time, in sweep 3. Also, some of the socio-demographic characteristics of grandparents are not collected for all the three relevant sweeps decreasing the amount of information on the individuals to explore the ways a series of factors affect the log of the odds of grandchildren being emotionally close to their grandparents over time. Instead, the main aim of this thesis is to observe and describe the effects of individual, family and structural aspects of the children's parents and grandparents within the predicted probabilities of an emotional close relationship between grandparents and grandchildren.

Binary logistic regression

The logistic regression model is one of the statistical regression techniques derived from the generalised Ordinary Least Squares (OLS). Similar to the linear regression model, the logistic regression model seeks to explain a dependent variable as a function of various independent variables. However, the linear regression model typically works with continuous unbounded dependent variables measured on an interval or ratio scale. The assumptions of this model are jeopardised when the dependent variable has two response categories. Instead, the logistic regression model is ideal for estimating the population parameters of the outcome variable, Y , given that the dependent variable has two possible categories. The logistic regression model fits a linear relationship to predict the prevalence of an outcome given a set of independent predictors. That is, to calculate the predicted probability value of each case to fall into one of the two categories of the dependent variable given by an independent or a set of independent variables. However, calculating the probability of each case to fall into each category encounters the issue that predicted values may take values below 0 and above 1. Instead, using *odds* as the ratio of the probability circumvents the upper and lower boundaries of observed values ($Y = 1$). Each of the independent variables predicts the log odds of a case or individual falling into each of the two categories of the dependent variable ‘emotional close relationship’. OLS techniques are, nonetheless, not appropriate for categorical dependent variables as it breaches the assumption of normally distributed errors (Treiman, 2009), linearity and homoscedasticity (Menard, 2002). The logistic regression model is based on the *Maximum likelihood estimation* to estimate the parameters of a statistical model by transforming the dependent variable, Y , into a *logit* (the natural logarithm of the odds).

The logistic regression model poses a linear relationship between a dependent dichotomous variable as a function of a set of predictor or independent variables. Typically, the regression equation is a linear relationship of the population parameters that takes the following form:

$$\text{logit}(Y) = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + \beta_k X_k \quad [1.1]$$

Analogously, the regression function of the estimates of the parameters:

$$\ln(F_{1|X_{1...k}} / F_{2|X_{1...k}}) = a + \sum_{k=1}^K b_k X_k \quad [1.2]$$

Where:

k – it is the number of independent variables included in the model.

a – it is the constant coefficient, when $Y=0$.

b – the slope coefficient for each of set of values of the independent variables included in the model.

$\ln(odds)$ – it is the natural log of the expected odds of being in category 1 of the dependent variable rather than in category 2.

The logit can be easily converted into odds by exponentiating the log of the odds, *logit*, resulting in the equation:

$$\text{Odds}(Y) = e^{\ln(\alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \dots + \beta_k X_k)}$$

The use of odds ratio as a measure of effect size of a predictor variable over an outcome variable is particularly straightforward and clear when the variable is categorical. In this thesis, I calculate the odds of grandchildren having an emotionally close relationship with their grandparents for a series of predictor variables. A unit change in the predictor variable yields a change in the odds of emotional closeness between generations occurring. Odds ratios greater than 1 indicate an increase in odds of grandchildren having an emotionally close relationship with their grandparents with a one-unit increase in the predictor variable. By contrast, odds ratios less than one indicate a decrease of the outcome happening with a one-unit change. In summary, the usage of odds ratio measures the influence of main effects on the dependent variable.

Interaction effects

Interaction effects were added to the regression models predicting emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents. The potential influence of interaction effects was devised drawing from social theory and existing empirical research. The potential moderating influence of variables such as the grandparent-parent contact and

the geographical propinquity of grandparents to the grandchild were examined separately in each of the models, and the models including and excluding interaction effects were compared using the *Wald test*. This test was selected instead of the *Likelihood-ratio test* (L^2) due to the unreliable results that provide when comparing models in logistic analysis (Treiman, 2009). Similar to the Likelihood-ratio test, the Wald test is a way of testing that the parameters associated to one or various explanatory variables are not zero. If the Wald test is significant the variable(s) should be included in the model, and, otherwise, omitted (Ibid).

However, instead of showing all the interaction effects, I have only included interaction effects that were significantly contributing to the model. If the interaction effect holds true (i.e. significant) means that the association between a predictor variable and an outcome variable is conditional on a third variable, which moderates the effect of the main factor on the outcome.

Assumptions of the logistic regression model: regression diagnostics

The logistic regression model can be confidently calculated if none of the assumptions are violated. The violation of any of the assumptions may be particularly problematic for the calculation of unbiased coefficients, efficient estimates, or valid statistical inferences. Biased coefficients are estimated logistic regression coefficients that systematically differ (either too high or too low) from 0 in comparison with the true values of the coefficients. Inefficient estimates have the particularity of producing large standard errors, which increases the likelihood of committing a type II error (failing to reject a null hypothesis when this is false). Finally, the calculation of statistical significance of the logistic regression coefficients may be inaccurate, which affects the validity of statistical inferences (Menard, 2002).

As it has been mentioned above, the logistic regression analysis is subjected to a series of assumptions, and failing to comply with any of them may result in the previously described effect. The logistic regression assumptions for the analysis are as follow:

- a) **Specification error:** the model includes all the relevant independent variables, and excludes any irrelevant variables. Also, the specification of the model demands the correct *functional*

form; the relationship between the dependent variable and each of the independent variables takes the form of a *linear* or *non-linear* relationship.

- b) **Collinearity:** multicollinearity occurs when independent variables are correlated with one another.
- c) **Zero cell count and complete separation:** zero cell count arises when a category of a categorical variable has odds of either 0 or 1, which can result in invariance of the dependent variable for one or more values (categories) of an independent variable. This has the problematic effect of producing very large standard errors, and even large coefficients.
- d) **Residuals:** the logistic regression model assumes binomial errors.

The logistic regression analysis for this PhD has taken into account the various assumptions and, correspondingly, taken measures to remedy any violation of the logistic regression analysis assumptions (see table 4 for details). In addition, the problem of zero cell count for some of categories of the independent variables in the models has been dealt by recoding the variables into fewer categories. Finally, I conducted checks for the existence of collinearity (multicollinearity) between two or more of the independent to avoid obtaining inflated standard errors of the estimated coefficients.

Qualitative research design

In this thesis I have also investigated the actions, meanings and interpretations of experiences of intimate relationships of grandparents with their grandchildren. One of the main aims of this thesis is to capture, analyse and explain complex processes of meaning-making and relationality in enabling, enacting and sustaining intimacy between grandparents and their grandchildren. I have made use of a qualitative research approach; this refers to a series of activities and practices of interpretive and practical nature that aim at deciphering the representations that social actors make of their social worlds (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). A diversity of methodological characteristics and methods of data collection identify qualitative research as an amalgamation of approaches, methods and techniques of analysis of the social world inhabited and provided with meaning by social actors. The sensitivity of qualitative research to the social world represented by social actors together with flexibility and attention to the contexts in which they are produced are perfectly adequate for mapping

processes and meanings that can provide understanding of the practices of intimacy between grandparents and their grandchildren.

Background

Intergenerational relationships are becoming increasingly important in family life (Bengtson et al., 2002a, Bengtson, 2001a). Gains in the life span, particularly of the oldest old, have led to extended co-survivorship of grandparents and grandchildren, extending the opportunities for exchanges between these two generations (Albertini et al., 2007, Henretta et al., 2002). Along these demographic transformations, social, cultural and economic changes have contributed to broader transformations in family life and personal relationships. For instance, an increasing prevalence of divorce and cohabitation, changes in the behaviours of family formation leading to postponing childbearing and lower parity and rise in childbearing outside marriage have also had influence in the ways grandparents relate with their grandchildren. Grandparents-grandchildren relationships are affected by all the above-mentioned changes, as well as material conditions structured around relations and practices of gender and lineage. Intergenerational relationships are complex and diverse and subjected to changes across the life course of individuals. It is precisely this variability and mutability in the relational and emotional patterns between grandparents and grandchildren that calls for further research of *what* and *how* grandparents make sense of their position and the quality of the relationship with their grandchildren in the context of family relationships and social change.

Criteria of recruitment of participants

The key participants chosen for this thesis are the grandparents of the ‘study child’ taking part of the Growing Up in Scotland study. While there is ample evidence of the importance of grandparents as contributors in family life (for a review see Glaser et al., 2010), the literature signals a wide variability in the extent to which they contribute to their children’s and grandchildren’s life depending on the gender of the grandparent (Zamarro, 2011), lineage (Lussier et al., 2002), or by their marital, socio-economic and health status (Glaser et al., 2013a). Importantly, this variability in the extent to which

grandparents can and *do* participate in the life of their grandchildren influences the feelings of emotional closeness of them towards their grandchildren (Lussier et al., 2002). Drawing on the literature on grandparenthood and early analysis of the GUS survey, the initial sample frame of grandparents considered the following aspects: marital or couple status of parents and grandparents, intergenerational contact between the grandchild's mother and the grandparent, geographical proximity of grandparents, gender and lineage of grandparents, as well as emotional closeness of grandchild-grandparent relationships. All these various aspects were combined in the process of creating a heterogeneous initial sample frame of cases for conducting interviews. Given the large number of cases in the GUS survey, a semi-random selection of 150 cases (first wave) were selected, and sent to ScotCen. A list of non-eligible cases was returned, and a second list of cases (Idnumbers) sent to replace the list of non-eligible cases. The same procedure (excluding the cases of the first initial wave) was followed in a second wave.

One of the main objectives of this thesis is to understand the influence of grandparenting experiences within the context of family life on the processes of enacting and sustaining a sense of emotional closeness with grandchildren. As such, the initial sample frame included both cases in which one of the grandparents was perceived as emotionally close and cases that they were perceived as emotionally distant. The decision to target grandparents who were perceived emotionally distant attained the variation on feelings of intimacy and intimate relationships between grandparents and grandchildren. This research strand draws on the concept of asymmetries in family relationships coined by Finch and Mason, by which exchanges of care and love might not be reciprocated between generations within a family (1993). As suggested in the literature, the nature of the relationship between grandparents and parents, and grandparents and grandchildren reflect important asymmetries in the significance of grandparents in the life of their grandchildren and the extent to which they provide support and personally invest on them (Douglas and Ferguson, 2003). Crucially, acknowledging asymmetries in family relationships detaches and strips out traditional normative views of family solidarity and reciprocity as suggested by Bengtson's (1991) intergenerational solidarity model, and, instead, it shifts the analytical attention towards processes of relationality and meaning-making. The

employment of the concept of ‘asymmetrical reciprocity’ in this research refers to the differently emotional feelings grandparents express towards their grandchildren, and help shed light on the ways grandparents make sense of emotional disparities with the different grandchildren.

However, all the recruited grandparents expressed feeling emotionally close to the grandchild participating in the GUS study. This raises some questions about the strategy to recruit grandparents through the mother of the child. The strained relationships between the child’s mother and grandparent can pose a barrier in recruiting grandparents for interviews. Also, the mother of the child might be more inclined in providing details of those grandparents who have a close relationship with her and her children. However, this decision of recruiting grandparents through the child’s mother was not an impediment for the study’s aims to contribute to knowledge of emotional asymmetries between grandparents and their grandchildren. Typically, grandparents have more than one child and grandchild, which offers an unparalleled opportunity to study the processes through which grandparents appraise and attach meaning and significance to the relationship with their grandchildren in various relational social positions.

Grandfathers were also targeted in the recruitment process to further the knowledge on the experiences and practices of intimacy in grandfatherhood. One of the main research interests is to elucidate the influence and meanings of gender on the experiences of grandparents in forming and sustaining a sense of a close and special relationship with their grandchildren. Research has shown significant contrasts in the involvement of grandmothers and grandfathers in their grandchildren’s lives, the second group reporting lower levels of contact (Tomassini et al., 2004), particularly after their adult children divorce or separation (Bridges et al., 2007). Typically, the experiences of grandfathers have been looked through the prism of grandmotherhood (Mann, 2007). However, gendered emotional experiences have been largely overlooked in the literature on intergenerational relationships, with only a handful of exceptions. Therefore, the importance of recruiting grandfathers and listening to their stories and perceptions became crucial to extend the understanding of gendered patterns of intimacy and emotionalities between grandparents and grandchildren, and how these influence on the practices enacted with their grandchildren and the meanings

associated to them. I draw on David Morgan's (2011a) concept of 'family' practices and the intersectionality with gendered practices to examine how mundane activities of daily living constitute a sense of a social position in family life and a gender identity. Importantly, I argue that exploring grandfathers' meanings and behaviours related to emotionalities and intimate life with their grandchildren can help surpass the gendered bias in grandparenting research. Similarly, the employment of the concept of masculinities can make the links between gendered identity, agency and practices of intimacy. These practices are cognitive and bodily practices that are significant for the grandparent and are attached meaning by her/him. The many ways grandfathers negotiate their identities as men highlights the tensions and negotiations between gendered structures and intimacies in everyday life. To that end, I draw on Lynn Jamieson's (2011) concept 'practices of intimacy' as a theoretical and analytical tool to facilitate the understanding of everyday intimate and family life experiences of grandparents with their grandchildren. Interestingly, this concept calls for the attention on the meaning-making processes that activities of daily living have on interpreting the quality of a relationship between individuals emphasising the social interaction with 'significant others' (for more details see chapter 3).

Finally, gathering experiences of grandparents whose grandchild's parents are divorced or separated is important to understand the influences of this life event on the patterns of intimacy between generations within a family. Drawing on the lifecourse approach, I emphasise the need to acknowledge the importance of lived experiences across time and the interplay with individual, social and historical time. This will facilitate in-depth understanding of the influences of divorce or separation on the relational emotional patterns between grandparents and grandchildren in the context of family life and family relationships. Considering a dynamic perspective can help discern changes over time. For instance, the influence of divorce on intergenerational relationships has pointed to some interesting findings on disparate patterns drawn on the basis of lineage and gender (e.g. Ferguson et al., 2004). Some research has pointed to decreases of the level of involvement of grandparents over time (Dench and Ogg, 2002) or affection (Silverstein and Long, 1998b). As Roberto and colleagues (2001) noted grandparent-grandchild relationships are transformed by 'the intersection of life courses of family members, the timing and sequencing of family events and the

developmental tasks of families' (p. 410). Adopting a lifecourse can help foreground tensions and strains in family relationships over time, and the importance of material conditions in the development of intimate life between grandparents and their grandchildren. In the context of this research, a lifecourse approach emphasises the dynamic, complex and relational processes of intimacy, in which the relationship with other family members affect the quality of the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren.

Sampling

The recruitment of grandparents for interviews was confronted with agents acting as gatekeepers. These agents were the child's mother, who not only control the access of grandparents to their grandchildren as suggested in previous research (Timonen and Doyle, 2012), but also the access to personal life information by proxy. My leeway to choose or select informants was then partly impaired. This was a consequence of using GUS as the sample frame of grandparents, rather than directly contacting grandparents through other means. However, the large number of children in the GUS study offers a vast amount of potential participants for the study. In order to talk to grandparents, I needed the collaboration of the mother of the child to supply contact details of the grandparents to me. In short, I could not at first contact the grandparents of the child without the mother's consent and her willingness to talk to her parents or parents-in-law to seek their approval to release their contact details to me.

If the sample of grandparents was to be broad, it was important that the divorced or separated mothers agreed on continuing a relationship and releasing details of both or either maternal and, crucially, paternal grandparents. The mothers were approached by letter and those who did not respond to the initial petition for participation were then sought via phone calls. The initially contacted mothers were approached to elicit their willingness to give out contact details of the grandchild's grandparents. This procedure was later proven to yield very little support and cooperation as they retained control. This difficulty of obtaining access to informants, grandparents, had a strong influence on which grandparents could be interviewed.

Other constraints in selecting informants were determined by opportunity costs in terms of money, time and accessibility. In the end, only three interviews were disregarded as a consequence of one of these mentioned impediments. The geography of Scotland and the largely widespread territorial cases that the recruitment process yielded generated some travel costs and time that could not be circumvented in this research.

The feeling of the lack of control in accessing informants brought out some analytical considerations of the process of recruiting and selecting informants to gather insights into their experiences and discourses on a sense of being emotionally close to their grandchildren. As previously mentioned the difficulties and negotiations in accessing informants were many. In addition, as noted in previous research, conflict or tensions between generations within a family can severely damage intergenerational relationships or lead to a complete loss of contact between parents and grandparents, particularly for paternal grandparents in the event of parental divorce (Dench and Ogg, 2002). The second source of difficulty in gaining access to the informants came from the same grandparents who at first might have agreed to be contacted by me but then at the time of negotiating the encounter to talk to each other refused the invitation.

Recruitment process

The present study employed a two-step recruitment process to access grandparents of the 'study child' in GUS. First, GUS participants, in its entire majority identified as the mother of the child, were contacted to obtain contact details of her parents or parents-in-law. I prepared an opt-in form (Appendix B), and identified potential interesting cases for interviewing based on the relevant variables in the GUS study. ScotCen crossed these identified cases with their records on consent for follow-up studies. Once the check procedures were finalised, ScotCen sent a letter, agreed with the principal researcher, and the opt-in form. The letter provided details of the type and nature of the study and the purpose of it (Appendix C). It contained information about the researcher and provided my contact details, as well as stating that all data will be safely stored and that the researcher abides by the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998. More crucially, the letter clearly states that participation in the study is entirely voluntary and that the study's participant can withdraw from it at any time. It also

encourages talking about the research with the study child's grandparents (a pack including the information leaflet and an opt-in form will be provided). The selected system to recruit GUS participants was agreed between me and ScotCen. The system was an opt-out system, which was clearly stated in the invitation letter sent to the child's mother. ScotCen passed on the details of those GUS participants who did not opt-out. These cases were later contacted through several rounds of phone calls to provide further information about the research and the need to talk to the grandparents.

The second step of the recruitment process involved the study child's mother. GUS participants were sent an information leaflet, opt-in form and consent form to pass onto the study child's grandparents. Grandparents' participation was obtained using an opt-in system through telephone calls or email. Interviews were only arranged with those who opted-in to the study and agreed to meet with the researcher.

The process of recruitment of participants has not been without obstacles. As a process embedded in a particular social reality, norms and values and codes of ethics and research practices have come together to shape the boundaries and of the available and possible paths for the recruitment of cases of grandparents to be interviewed. All these aspects of the process are of importance in this research and constitute *per se* a justification of the decisions taken at certain moments of the process and as a source of understanding the limitations of the recruited and subsequent interviewed individuals.

The access to the participants of interest to this research, grandparents, was not direct. Direct access refers to the possibility to contacting the potential candidate for interview or interested cases of study without mediation or intermediates. In this research, consent was first sought from the daughter or daughter in law to give permission to speak to the requested grandparent. The reason behind this indirect procedure of consent is that GUS is a survey conducted with the child's main carer who in 99% of the cases is the mother of the child. As a consequence, the child's mother is the point of contact between the researcher and the child's grandparents. This indirect procedure of recruitment poses without doubt difficulties in the recruitment of cases identified through the GUS survey. For instance, the contact details for paternal grandparents whose child is divorced or separated were not given by the mother of the child.

There were two rounds of letters for initial recruitment. These two rounds consisted of approximately 150 letters sent to the households of the study child in the GUS study addressed to the mother. In total, 300 letters were sent across Scotland. In each letter it specified the particular case that was targeted, i.e. maternal or paternal grandparents. In aggregate of the two rounds, 10 responses were achieved either by letter or email. Two weeks after sending the letters, and provided there was no response in either direction from the GUS participants, arrangements were made for a third party person to make phone calls⁵ to non-respondents from the ScotCen premises. In total I obtained 34 consent forms from the child's mother either by letter, mail or phone with details from the targeted grandparents. I then contacted these 34 grandparents to arrange an interview. Three interviews were cancelled due to hospitalisation of the grandparent. In one case I was unable to get hold of the grandparent despite repeated efforts to do so. Three grandparents refused to arrange an interview despite initial consent due to trust issues or lack of interest. Two could not be arranged given the costs of travelling. In one other case the grandparents spend most of their time out of the country. Out of these 34 I accomplished 24 interviews. Table 5 summarises the recruitment numbers.

Table 5 Recruitment process numbers

Total number of letters sent	300
Number of initial response (opt-in)	10
Total number of parents contacted by phone	205
Total number of consents agreed on the phone	24
Total number of grandparents contacted	33
Total number of interviews	24

Reasons for no consent

The most common responses of rejection of participation given by the children's mothers were loss of contact or death of the grandparent, as well as research exhaustion (i.e. being fed up with participating in the GUS project). Other reasons such as a

⁵ Two external individuals were hired as per requirement of ScotCen. All phones calls had to carried out in the ScotCen premises in Edinburgh. Each individual was hired to conduct six two-hour sessions of phone calls interchanging between morning and afternoon during weekdays.

personal judgement of the suitability of the grandparent to be interviewed or the grandparent spending much of the time abroad were other reasons given for not consenting to contact the grandparents for an interview. All these reasons justify the limited scope of available candidates for interviews. I have not considered here whether there is a factor of randomness in the consideration and rejection of participant grandparents in this study.

Data protection

All data collected in this study is securely stored. The researcher handled all obtained personal data from both the GUS survey and the participants abiding by the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998. In accordance to the Data Protection Act (DPA) 1998, all data will be processed fairly and lawfully (Principle 1). The researcher (i.e. Eloi Ribe) followed the procedures by: only making legitimate use of the data, avoiding unjustified adverse effects on the individuals concerned, providing transparent information to participants about the collection, use, disclosing, retaining and disposing of the collected data, and making no unlawful use of the data. All collected data was only used for the purposes of the present PhD study and there will be no disclosure of the personal data to a third party (Principle 2). Also, the amount of personal data hold is adequate, relevant and not excessive (Principle 3) to the purpose of exploring grandparents' relationship with their grandchildren for each family. The data will not be kept for longer than necessary (Principle 5), that is, it will only be retained until the end of the present PhD and safely disposed at the end of it. The rights of individuals ensure that they can access to a copy of their file, object to processing, prevent processing, claim compensations for damages, and, in certain circumstances, a right to have inaccurate personal data rectified, blocked, erased or destroyed (Principle 6). All data will be securely protected (Principle 7); the information was kept under password-protected computer, and only the principal researcher (i.e. Eloi Ribe) had access to it.

The present PhD research also abides by the Research Ethics rules of the School of Social and Political Science of the University of Edinburgh (level 2) (Appendix D), and follows the ethical guidelines of the Economic and Social Research Council.

Demographics of recruited participants

Twenty-four interviews were conducted with grandparents. The circumstances of the interviews, however, were various. Out of these 24 interviews, 12 were with the couple of grandparents, 9 were with the grandmother alone, and 3 with the grandfather alone. The ages of the interviewed grandparents ranged from 43 years to 89. With regards the type of grandparent, eight were only maternal, eight only paternal and eight other cases were both maternal and paternal grandparents. These grandparents varied in the number of grandchildren they have ranging from 1 to 9. The grandchildren are aged from as young as only a few months old to 25 years-old. Table E1 in Appendix E provides further details on the characteristics of the interviewed grandparents, the grandchildren's parents and grandchildren.

Interviewing couples vs interviewing individuals

Most of the interviews conducted for the present research happened in the presence of the grandparent and myself only. In this setting confidentiality was strongly guaranteed allowing the interviewee to express herself or himself fully accounting for her or his words. Although this does not lessen the quality, validity or certainty of these accounts over other compositional interview settings, interviewing couples always prompted some more management and caution of grandparents in what was being said in front of the other. However, there were some exceptions in which the couple dynamics prompted a more vivid conversation. Although in the practical totality of interviews with couples the interviewees had a similar discourse and often reassured the other on their views and values, there were some occasions that diverging opinions led to obtaining a more complete picture of personal experiences within the same family context. Nonetheless, the fact of interviewing couples was not in detriment of the information and discourses sought from the interviews. However, they need to be understood as a co-construction of their experiences and meanings of the relationships with grandchildren.

The most problematic interview was in one occasion where the daughter was also present. Her presence clearly contributed to shape and transform the interview; she

was at first aloof from the conversation, but she gradually joined in until she was also answering questions and prompting a particular discourse on the informant's answers by means of eliciting memories from past events. While this was of value to talk about the relationship between the grandparent and her grandchildren, it limited the openness of the grandmother to reflect on more delicate and unspoken matters such as tensions with the grandchildren. The doubt remains whether the answers would have differed much had the daughter not participated in the interview. Her participation, however, helped generating a more relaxed and informal ambience transforming the interview in a more conversational form. This was later confirmed with a follow-up email from the daughter expressing her gratitude on behalf of her mother.

Data collection

The choice of utilising qualitative methods lies in the strength of this methodological strand to capture the meanings and experiences of individuals. This approach is particularly appropriate when attempting to capture 'the messiness and particularities of family relationships and everyday intimate life' (Gabb, 2008, p. 29). The epistemological stance in the present research, which is in convergence with the selected research strategy and ontological assumptions, fits into an understanding of *knowledge* as a product of human activity, that is, meanings and experiences constitute the social world (Berger and Luckmann, 1979). As Bryman (2004) puts it 'Social reality has a meaning for human beings and therefore human action is meaningful, that is, it has meaning for them and they act on the basis of the meanings that they attribute to their acts and to the acts of others' (p. 4). I have focussed attention upon the experiences and practices of intimacy grandparents enable, enact and sustain with their grandchildren, and the meanings associated with them.

Much of the research on family relationships has relied upon the use of in-depth interviews, and are understood as a 'process of interpersonal communication, ascribed within a wider social and cultural context' (Valles, 2003, p.190). In-depth interviews have a series of advantages for the purposes of this research: 1) rich collection of information and data; 2) flexibility to enquire further on any topic; 3) it helps to create points of view and hypothesis; 4) it adds to quantitative analysis results; 5) it increases the chances to obtain data; 6) the transmission of information occurs in a totally private

setting and favours transmitting less superficial information (Valles, 2003). It can be added the capacity of interviews to generate biographical data while also studying social norms, values and meanings of social practices, the underlying and non-obvious matters of individuals' lives (Miles and Huberman, 1994). They offer strategies to grasp processes, meanings and experiences of individuals as they can offer detail and focus on more abstract and conceptual aspects (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Hence, the qualitative approach is the right fit for understanding meanings of experiences of everyday life. The depth of information yielded by using qualitative means is of particular importance for the study of mundane activities of daily life that are significant for grandparents in constituting a sense of being close and attuned with their grandchildren.

I employed semi-structured and open-ended and non-directive questions. However, a certain degree of standardisation was applied as a list of questions and topics were asked to all interviewers, although the order of questions differed from interviewee to interviewee. Although there was an order in the interview guide (Appendix F), in real interviewing conditions the conversation would be driven by the pre-structured questions but often a more fluid approach would be employed as themes would overlap and be spoken before the intended sequence of the interview guide had anticipated. This approach allowed for a more natural free-floating discussion, while keeping control over the topics of interest of the research.

However, I also acknowledge a series of limitations when using interviews. One of the major obstacles was time. The length of the interview had to be adjusted to the interviewees' needs, which affected the extent to which relevant aspects of the relationships could be explored. Also, interviews are *reactive*; the interaction between interviewer-interviewee might have affected the interview and the data obtained (Valles, 2003). Hence, validation of results might be jeopardised by the setting or the interview process itself. Also, it lacks direct observation of the surrounding area where the action occurs. Reflexivity has also been accounted when conducting interviews with subjects.

The interviews lasted between one and two-and-a-half hours. The language used in all the interviews was English. All the interviews I conducted with grandparents took

place in their homes. In the negotiation to gain access I offered the possibility of meeting in a place of their convenience. I thought that would give them enough empowerment over deciding the conditions of the interviews to feel comfortable and by no means threatened by a complete stranger. To a certain extent I was surprised that all the informants preferred to meet at their home rather a more open public place. After all they seemed more comfortable and at ease at their own place. They would set the time and date, although in some occasions given my agenda I could not meet the initial requirement and I would have to negotiate an alternative date. The fact that I was entering into the private premises of my informants had an effect on the way I presented myself and I took extra caution in managing the space and position of sitting and talking. I tried to build rapport with the interviewees to achieve a good level of understanding and enable an easier and more open communication with them, a way to make them feel at ease and open up on intimate matters such as emotions and feelings, but also strains and tensions in family life.

Data analysis

The interviews with grandparents and field notes constituted the sources of qualitative data. First, interviews were transcribed, and, in parallel, field notes written in an attached memo prompting reflection on the data and establishing a dialogical analysis between data and theory. The analysis of the data was closely examined with the research aims and questions about the processes by which grandparents enact and sustain intimacy with their grandchildren and the meanings of their experiences with them. The approach of data analysis is linked to the research design, with an ontological view of reality drawing on an interpretivist approach. As aforementioned, knowledge is socially produced in interpersonal interactions between individuals in particular social, cultural and personal contexts (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Thus, it is through examination and interpretation of grandparents' meanings of intimacy, and reasons offered to explain and make sense of their behaviour and feelings, that provide the richness of data for answering the research questions.

The research process, from collecting data using interviews and analysing these data, draws on a social constructivist approach of the grounded theory (Charmaz, 2004) to

fulfil the research purposes. The research process is then understood as a social construction, and it is relational and reflexive. I consider this particular method of data analysis the most adequate to address the research questions of the actions and processes through which grandparents enable, enact and sustain a sense of being intimate and emotionally close to their grandchildren. It also addresses whether and how there are differences in emotionalities by gender, and the influence of divorce or separation in the parental and grandparental generations on the interpretations of intimacy. This approach allows for greater flexibility and openness to linking theory with an iterative process of analytical development.

The data constructed through the narratives from the grandparent interviews about their experiences of intimacy and meanings associated with them was analysed in different stages. Firstly, I coded the data into categories and sub-categories related to the research questions about feelings and emotions of grandparenting, the grandparent role, the nature of the relationship with adult children and grandchildren, and the implications of parental and grandparental divorce or separation on contact, communication and support between grandparents and grandchildren. This first stage focused on the descriptive accounts and explicit aspects of intergenerational relationships and lifecourse experiences.

Second, I carried out multiple critical readings of the scripts and reflected upon main categories and sub-categories. At this stage, I interpreted the data contained in the categories, and produced further analytical layers to inform the different aspects and meanings of these categories with data. This stage was a close coding identifying processes, actions and meanings of intimacy (i.e. conceptualising data) driven by theoretical sampling. Charmaz (2012) refers to the theoretical sampling strategy as ‘gathering data to fill out the properties of a tentative category’ (p. 11). Analysing and reflecting upon the data in each of the codes and their possible interrelations allowed for a systematic check and refinements of the theoretical categories. This phase of inquiring the data surpassed initial coding to a more focused coding. I coded paragraph-by-paragraph, and then focussed on incidents and stories as a heuristic device in the process of coding. As Charmaz (2012), I understand coding as an interaction process between myself and the data. For example, ‘doing intimacy’ is an important category across all the grandparents’ accounts referring to the varied ways

through which grandparents understand and make sense of the quality of relationship with grandchildren and the process of building this quality. Also, the connection between ‘doing intimacy’ and the explanation of gendered behaviours and meanings of verbal and non-verbal forms of intimacy were important to reveal gendered identities in later life that challenge hegemonic masculinities (Connell, 1987) in new and dynamic generational contexts and relationships.

Finally, in the process of theoretical sampling, memo-writing was an analytic strategy to identify actions and processes of meaning making of intimacy in grandparenting. This stage of the data analysis prompted a close examination and interpretation in the light of the study’s research questions and new emergent questions. Analytical questions were key in conceptualising data. What are the meanings of intimacy? Why is important for grandparents to have an intimate relationship with grandchildren? How do they enact feelings of closeness? What do they do with grandchildren and what meanings do these activities have for their self and sense of identity? These are some key examples of analytic questions in the memos linking data across the different narratives from the grandparent interviews that saturated theoretical categories. At this stage, the social constructivist method of analysis was useful for its comparative and iterative strategies of data analysis investigating tacit meanings and processes of grandparents’ intimate life. Notably, these questions helped in the theoretical development of the code ‘doing intimacy in grandparenting’, and revealed complex meanings of mundane activities that elicit feelings and display emotions towards grandchildren, and processes of construction of self and other in meaning-making interactions.

Reflexivity

My position as a researcher throughout all the stages of this research was critical in its development and interpretation of the data and the communication and interaction with participants. As pointed out by Charmaz’s social constructivist approach, data are produced in interaction between the researcher and participants. Thus, my personal experience with grandparents played at all times a role in relating and interpreting the narratives of my participants, and presented some challenges in surpassing tacit

understandings of feelings and emotions, and the interpretation of these in the process of data analysis.

Nonetheless, the diversity of experiences of grandparent-grandchild relationships did help me focussing on their stories and experiences, rather than immersing myself into their stories. However, some level of familiarity with these stories might have played some role in reproducing tacit meanings about intimate grandparent-grandchild relationships, and in encouraging some obliviousness to other implicit connotations and meanings in the data. These shortcomings in the data analysis were remedied by supervision, discussion of findings in conferences and multiple critical readings of the data.

In addition, my mood, my skills of relating to people or circumventing difficult situations also affected the process of collecting data in the interviews. All these factors are important as each situation is different, and the interaction between me and participants were at times formal and distant, but other times they were informal and casual. However, the potential difficulties of opening up given the topic of research and the age gap of me and grandparents were in the large majority of interviews negligible. This is not to say that grandparents were immediately at ease to reveal inner thoughts and feelings, and at times they were withholding information either because they thought it was not adequate to express it or they feared that could be wrongly interpreted. This brings to the fore issues such as emotional and personal constraints in family relationships in disclosing troubles and tensions in the family. But as mentioned, the interviews with grandparents were in the vast majority of cases informal.

Although I was seen as a researcher, in many occasions they prompted me with questions about my personal experience with my grandparents, so regarding me as a grandchild. Typically, when prompted about my personal opinion on a matter or experience I did not want to share much and gave vague answers that would attempt to avoid influencing interviewees. Similarly, I avoided entering in any discussion with their views about any of the topics discussed during the interviews or make judgements about any personal, political or religious matter. In all interviews I attempted to be understanding of their experiences and thoughts, and respect their desires to stop

talking about at times emotionally difficult situations such as the loss of contact with children and grandchildren.

Facing grandparents with reflection on the mundane proved to galvanise their thinking of their relationship with their grandchildren, acknowledging what is important in the ways they interact with each other, reflect upon their emotions and the emotions of their grandchildren, as well as reflecting on the previous lived experiences, while reflecting on the meanings and the involved material and perennial circumstances circumscribing and characterising routinised, ordinary everyday practices. While in most interviews they shared their thoughts and elaborated further in their meanings, there was one interview that was the opposite. Martha and Rob, a couple of grandparents, answered to my questions with short answers such as “It’s the same for all grandparents”, “I don’t know” or vague statements about the relationship with their grandchildren such as “Good”. Even trying to encourage further reasoning on various questions about the nature of the relationship with their grandchildren and their feelings towards them by showing interest and noting how valuable their personal experience is, I did not get much further information. From the conversation I gained the strong impression that they liked their grandchildren, but had very little relation with the parents of the grandchildren, a situation they lived with bitterness and sadness. Strains and conflicts in the family were always the more difficult topics to be discussed with grandparents. My personal experience about the difficulties of people in disclosing family troubles provided me with enough confidence and ways to relieve any tensions arising from prompting such memories and feelings. At other times, I did even manage to provide enough reassurance for them to confide in me and disclose troubling feelings in family relationships, and the ways affected them emotionally, as well as the relationship with their grandchildren.

In summary, the process of collecting and analysing data was not independent of my own personal experience, and the various personal and social circumstances influencing the interaction between me and grandparents. Yet, the familiarity with grandparent-grandchild intimate relationships did not jeopardise the research process, but, on the contrary, provided me with a series of personal and analytical tools and skills to surpass challenges during interviews, and analysing the data.

Chapter Five

Enabling emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents

Introduction

This chapter explores the extent to which the structure of needs and opportunities for interaction and the opportunities for developing an emotionally close relationship between grandchildren and their grandparents explains the grandchild's mother's perception of a sense of closeness between the youngest and the oldest generation. It will particularly look at the different socio-demographic aspects of grandchildren, mothers and grandparents, grandchildren's family circumstances, intergenerational face-to-face contact and geographical living proximity between generations. The main aim of this chapter is to explore the differences in the extent to which these factors influence the sense of an emotionally close relationship between grandchildren and four types of grandparents, namely maternal and paternal grandmothers and grandfathers. First, this chapter briefly reviews the empirical research on the involvement and closeness between grandchildren and grandparents. Next, it discusses relevant conceptual frameworks for the study of grandparenthood. Finally, the findings are presented and discussed.

Literature review

Much of the empirical research on grandparent-grandchild relationships has focussed on the factors shaping the nature and extent of contact and intergenerational support of grandparents towards grandchildren, but there is limited evidence on the factors influencing emotional closeness between them (see chapter 1 for a comprehensive review of the literature). In short, the empirical research literature shows that grandmothers are typically perceived by their grandchildren as the closest grandparent (Boon and Brussoni, 1996), but quantitative and qualitative research suggests that grandfathers are becoming more involved in emotional and caring forms with their grandchildren (Roberto et al., 2001, Brown, 2003, Mann and Leeson, 2010). Also,

family lineage has been found to be associated with emotional closeness between grandparents and grandchildren, with maternal grandparents having stronger emotional ties compared to paternal ones (Chan and Elder, 2000), although other evidence only found that grandchildren were significantly emotionally closer to maternal grandmothers compared to paternal grandfathers (Davey et al., 2009). Evidence on the influence of age of the grandparent on closeness with grandchildren points to some inconclusive results. While reports from young adult grandchildren show that they have weaker emotional ties with older grandparents (Mills et al., 2001), grandparents' perception of closeness with their grandchildren was found to be stronger for older grandparents compared to their younger counterparts (Silverstein and Long, 1998).

The existing research on the effects of intergenerational contact between parents and grandparents and grandparents' geographical proximity of living to grandchildren suggests that regular intergenerational contact and close geographical proximity is associated with stronger intimate ties between grandparents and grandchildren (Silverstein and Marengo, 2001, Boon and Brussoni, 1996, Davey et al., 2009). However, there is certain disagreement in the literature over the effects of geographical proximity of grandparents in sustaining a close relationship with grandchildren. While some research suggests that there is a decline in grandchildren's emotional closeness with geographically distant grandparents (Creasey and Kaliher 1994; Thompson 1999), other studies stress continuities in intimate ties between grandparents and grandchildren despite greater geographical distance (Ferguson et al., 2004). With regards to evidence on the association between the quality of the bond between the parent and grandparent and grandparent-grandchild closeness, some research has shown that the better quality of this relationship is associated with greater grandchild-grandparent emotional closeness (Whitbeck et al., 1993, King and Elder, 1995, Chan and Elder, 2000, Brown, 2003). Despite the wealth of empirical research on grandparenthood, most of these studies focus on adult grandchildren rather than grandchildren in their early ages, are mainly based in the US and use purposive samples rather than nationally representative samples. This chapter examines how individual, familial and socio-structural circumstances of grandchildren influence the

mothers' perception of closeness between grandchildren when they are approximately aged three years and their maternal and paternal grandparents.

Theoretical framework

In this chapter I critically draw upon different conceptual bodies and key ideas on intergenerational relationships to guide the analysis of the variations in emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents. The nature of the connection between family members has attracted some scholarly attention pointing at different motivations or aspects that explain differently exchanges between family members (see chapter 2 for a detailed discussion). The relationship between grandparents and grandchildren can be explained by the strength of the bonds between generations in a family, and are shaped by the structure of family needs and opportunities to interact. The intergenerational solidarity model (Bengtson et al., 2002, Bengtson and Roberts, 1991) conceptualises intergenerational relationships focussing on six dimensions of solidarity (associational, affectual, consensual, functional, normative and opportunity structure for interaction) to capture family mutuality and cohesion. These dimensions of intergenerational solidarity can be extrapolated to grandchild-grandparent relationships, and more concretely to the study of what drives affectual solidarity between generations in the family. Thus, the strength in each of the dimensions of solidarity interplay with each other forming the basis for mutual cohesion between family members, and inform about differences in affectual solidarity between them. Importantly, based on the empirical research literature grandparents have different opportunities to participate in the life of their grandchildren. In this context, greater practical and financial needs of the middle generation, and more opportunities for interaction given structural circumstances of living would explain the extent to which grandparents are able to participate in the life of their grandchildren, and through this participation construct an emotionally close relationship.

Nonetheless, the intergenerational solidarity model overlooks possible contradictions between individual preferences and structures, and it largely draws on a binary logic of presence or absence (conflict) of solidarity between family members. Alternatively, Connidis and McMullin (2002) proposed a more encompassing understanding of

intergenerational relationships through the lens of intergenerational ambivalence that breaks with the normative character of the solidarity model and foresees the co-existence of both positive and negative sentiments in intergenerational relationships, and contradictions and tensions between parental needs and personal preferences of grandparents (Timonen and Doyle, 2012). As such, ambivalence suggests that the existence of intergenerational solidarity between adult children and grandparents is not irremediably linked to strong affective ties between grandchildren and their grandparents. Similarly, family needs might have a negative impact on intergenerational affectual solidarity.

However, these two conceptual frameworks largely focus on dyadic relationships, and obviate the mediating effect of other family relationships that influence the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren. Instead, the life course perspective (Elder, 1998, Elder et al., 2003, King and Elder, 1995) stresses the importance of '*linked lives*' as a prism through which intergenerational relations are understood. This analytical approach poses that individual behaviour is interconnected as it combines the individuals' own position and that of other family members. The life course approach is particularly useful in capturing the complexity of family ties, with the parent-grandparent relationship as a mediating factor of the quality of the relationship between grandchildren and their grandparents. However, the life course perspective has been developed to describe the actions of individuals in different developmental stages and their relation with those of other family members. Thus, it does not adequately explain how feelings of closeness are enacted under certain individual and family circumstances and the variations seen between maternal and paternal grandmothers and grandfathers.

While there has been growing scholarly interest in the role and relationships of grandparents within families, there remains a gap in explaining how and why gender and lineage has an influence in grandparent-grandchild relationships (Dubas, 2001). Some authors advocate that preferences are driven by 'gendered moral rationalities' (Wheelock and Jones, 2002) that favour the participation of grandmothers in the life of grandchildren, while others stress traditional gender norms asserting the role of women as kin-keepers, which assume that women are more inclined to be involved

and maintain interpersonal kin relationships (Cherlin and Furstenberg, 1992). However, Roberto and colleagues (2001) point out that explaining differences between grandparents based on a traditional gender difference model obscures the complex relational and practical nature of intergenerational relationships across the lifecourse. Instead, they propose to understand these differences grounded on family experiences and social processes that allow surpassing the narrowness of the duality of roles based on the assumption that grandmothers have emotional relationships with their grandchildren and grandfathers are limited to an instrumental involvement. In addition, it is suggested that the ‘matrifocal tilt’ and ‘matrilineal advantage’ is largely the result of more regular contact and better quality of the relationship between mothers and maternal grandparents, which emphasises the relational character of family relationships (Chan and Elder, 2000). Overall, the effects of gender and lineage on intergenerational relationships have been loosely theorised and largely focused on the experiences of grandmothers alone (Mann, 2007). Assessing the extent to which grandmothers and, particularly, grandfathers are emotionally close to grandchildren is one of the main aims of this thesis.

Research Questions

This chapter addresses the research question on the extent to which the structure of family needs and opportunities for interaction, as well as intergenerational social contact within and across family lineage, influence the mothers’ perception of a sense of emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents. More specifically, the research question is:

RQ1: Does the structure of family needs and opportunities for intergenerational solidarity and the opportunities to develop an emotionally close relationship explain mothers’ perception of closeness between grandchildren in their early years and their grandparents? Does close living proximity of grandchildren and one set of grandparents (either maternal or paternal lineage), and contact between mothers and these grandparents, influence reported closeness with the grandparents of the opposite lineage?

Drawing on the intergenerational solidarity model and the lifecourse approach, it is hypothesised that the structure of family needs and opportunities for interaction

between grandparents and grandchildren influence the affective ties between grandchildren and their grandparents. It is expected that intergenerational emotional closeness will be greater in families with more economic and temporal family needs for aid and support towards grandchildren in their early years, and lower in those families in which grandparents live geographically distant. Also it is expected that emotional closeness is influenced by the opportunities to develop an emotionally close relationship, with grandparents who see the grandchild rarely or never having fewer opportunities to develop a close relationship than those grandparents who do it daily. It is argued that these factors shape and enable the opportunities of grandparents to participate in the life of their grandchildren and construct an emotionally close relationship.

Gender and lineage are also identified as structured social relations that shape the opportunities for involvement of grandparents in the life of their grandchildren. Because of the 'matrifocal tilt' and 'matrilineal advantage' of intergenerational relationships, it is expected that grandmothers, and particularly, maternal grandmothers, will be perceived by the mother of the child as emotionally close to the grandchild regardless of structure of family needs and opportunities for interaction. As such, stronger ties between mothers and their mothers will preclude from negative effects for developing emotional closeness between the grandchild and the grandmother. By contrast, paternal grandfathers are expected to be in a worse off position.

Additionally, this chapter also aims at exploring the effects of the relationship with other members of the child's kinship network on the possibilities of grandparents to enable close intimate ties with the grandchild. It is hypothesised that the opportunities of grandparents to participate in the life of their grandchildren is hindered by the opportunities and social relations of the other set of grandchild's grandparents. It is hypothesised that if one side of the grandparents live in geographical proximity and there is intense social contact between the grandchild and the grandparent, then this has negative effects on the perception of closeness between the grandchild and the opposite lineage of grandparents as it hinders the chances to enable and develop an emotionally close relationship. However, it is expected that these effects will vary between gender and lineage of grandparents, with maternal grandparents experiencing

low or no negative effects, and paternal grandparents, particularly paternal grandfathers showing strong negative effects when maternal grandparents have intense contact with the grandchild and are living geographically close to the grandchild's house.

Binary Logistic Regression

A series of indicators have been chosen to capture the structure of family needs and opportunities for interaction and participation in the child's life that enable and construct an emotionally close relationship between grandchildren and their grandparents. This structure is captured through the household income, mothers' educational level and employment status, intergenerational social contact and geographical proximity of the grandparent to the grandchild's house. Also, other independent variables that are also known to shape the structure of needs and opportunities were controlled for in the various models. These include the mother's age at birth of the sample child, sex of the grandchild, number of siblings in the household and the age of the grandchild's grandparents.

The mothers were interviewed between 2005 and 2006 when the child was approximately aged three. It is of particular importance to note that the answer to the dependent variable '*emotional closeness*' between the grandchild and their grandparents is provided by the mother of the child. Thus, some caution and acknowledgement of this circumstance must be taken at all times when interpreting the results and drawing conclusions. As such, it is the grandchild's mother perception of emotional closeness between the child in the sample and her/his grandparents. However, the mother's position is of particular importance in the early years of the child in organising and regulating access and social contact of grandchildren with other kin members.

The analysis of the effects of the structure of needs and opportunities for interaction and actual involvement in the child's life on enabling and enacting a sense of emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents, was by mean of binary logistic regression (a detailed account of this technique can be found in page 122 in

the methodology chapter). The four models within a set are not directly comparable since the analytic sample differs from one grandchild-grandparent dyad to another. Also, each grandchild-grandparent dyad may contain different subsets of children depending on differences in mortality of specific grandparents within and across families. The main objective here is to compare the extent to which a series of variables capturing the structure of family needs and opportunities for interaction are associated with intergenerational relationships of emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents. I consider the multiplicative effects of each independent variable on the odds of the dependent variable. Odds ratios (antilogs of the *bs*) are the ratios of the odds of the outcome (emotional closeness) for grandchildren who differ by one unit with respect to a given independent variable, holding constant all other independent variables. The equations (specified in Appendix G) for each of the grandchild-grandparent dyads are based on cross-sectional data using the third sweep of the Birth Cohort 1 of the GUS survey.

Findings

Table 6 shows the frequency distribution of the various indicators of the structure of family needs and opportunities for interaction between the children in the GUS study aged approximately three years, and each of the four types of grandparents - their maternal and paternal grandmothers and grandfathers. The percentage of observations dropped using *casewise* deletion vary across the four analytic samples: 6.5% of observations were dropped in the analytic sample of grandchildren's relationship with their maternal grandmother; 7.4% in the maternal grandfather; 7.8% in the paternal grandmother; and 8.5% in the paternal grandfather subsample. In summary, table 6 shows that there are slightly more male children than female, and marginally more mothers that gave birth to the study child at age thirty or older, rather than younger. Children in each of the subsamples have most likely to have mothers working part-time or not working, and the predominant level of education of mothers is a vocational qualification or a degree or equivalent. The distribution of children by annual household income is relatively homogenous across the quintiles in each of the four dyads, although with a few notable differences. For the two maternal grandparents almost a quarter of grandchildren live in a household in the lowest quintile, whereas

in the analytic sample of paternal grandmothers and grandfathers the percentage was 14.7% and 13.6%, respectively. In any of the four analytic samples the study child has largely one sibling living in the household, and less than one quarter of the grandchildren's households had two or more siblings. Also, in any of the four subsamples of children the percentage of cases with a young grandparent (35-49) is inferior than a fifth of the total children, and as little as 6.6% of children have a young paternal grandfather, whereas 18.9% of children in the subsample of maternal grandmothers had a young maternal grandmother.

The frequency distribution of emotional closeness between children and each of the four types of grandparents show some interesting aspects. While the majority of children has a close relationship to the grandparent in each of the four dyads, only slightly over one-tenth of children (11.3%) were perceived as emotionally *not* close to the maternal grandmother. Almost a quarter of children (23.2%) with a maternal grandfather were perceived by the mother of *not* having an emotionally close relationship with the grandparent. Turning to the dyad with the paternal grandmother as many as 26.9% of children were *not* deemed to have an emotionally close relationship with the paternal grandmother. This percentage was 34.4% for the grandchild-paternal grandfather dyad.

With regards to the frequency of face-to-face contact between grandchildren and their grandparents, table 6 shows that in any of the four subsamples grandchildren had some face-to-face contact with each of the four types of grandparents, although in each of the dyads the percentage distribution of children by frequency of contact with the grandparent is substantially different. For instance, 41.4% of grandchildren in the subsample of maternal grandmothers had everyday or almost everyday face-to-face contact with this grandparent, 33.5% of grandchildren were in high intensity contact with their maternal grandfather, by only 14.4% in the subsample of paternal grandmothers and 13.2% in the paternal grandfather dyad.

Alternatively, barely 3.9% of grandchildren had no contact of any kind with the maternal grandmother, 10.9% of the children in the subsample of maternal grandfathers had no type of contact, 12.3% in the paternal grandmothers and 16.7% in the grandchild-paternal grandfather dyad. Also, the geographical living proximity of

children and their grandparents shows that the large majority are in close proximity. Yet, a fifth (25.5%) of children were geographically distant in the maternal grandmother dyad, and about a third of children in the maternal grandfather (31.1%) and paternal grandmother (31.7%) and over a third in the paternal grandfather (34.2%).

Table 6 Univariate descriptive statistics of individual, family and socio-structural aspects at age 3 of the grandchild by type of grandparent, Birth Cohort 1 (%)

Variable name and categories	Maternal grandmother ¹	Maternal grandfather ¹	Paternal grandmother ¹	Paternal grandfather ¹
	(N= 3,442)	(N= 2,732)	(N= 2,840)	(N= 2,182)
Sex of the grandchild				
Male	51.2	50.5	51.5	51.6
Female	48.8	49.5	48.5	48.4
Age mother at birth				
Under 20	7.3	7.7	4.5	4.6
20 to 30	41.9	44.3	40.0	42.1
30 and over	50.8	47.9	55.5	53.3
Mother's employment status				
Full-time	14.2	14.0	15.2	15.0
Part-time	48.6	49.3	51.1	51.7
Not working	37.2	36.7	33.7	33.3
Mother's education				
Degree or equivalent	28.7	28.7	31.9	32.5
Vocational qualification	38.2	38.7	39.0	39.1
below degree				
Higher grade or equivalent	7.8	7.8	7.6	7.5
Standard grade or equivalent	17.3	16.9	15.4	14.9
No qualifications	8.0	7.9	6.0	5.9
Annual household income				
Bottom quintile	23.2	23.2	14.7	13.6
2 nd quintile	21.1	20.8	21.9	21.4
3 rd quintile	18.9	19.1	20.5	20.0
4 th quintile	20.1	20.2	23.4	24.4
Top quintile	16.6	16.7	19.5	20.7
Siblings in the household				
No siblings	33.1	33.2	30.1	30.2
1 sibling	44.2	44.9	46.2	47.2
2 or more siblings	22.7	21.8	23.7	22.6
Age of the grandparent				
35 – 49	18.9	14.1	9.3	6.6
50 – 64	58.2	57.3	58.3	55.8
65+	22.9	28.6	32.4	37.6
Closeness with the grandparent				
Not mentioned	11.3	23.2	26.9	34.4
Mentioned	88.7	76.8	73.1	65.6
Face-to-face contact grandchild-grandparent				
Everyday or almost	41.4	33.5	14.4	13.2
Once a month or more often	41.3	40.1	56.2	51.6
Less often than once a month	13.3	15.5	17.1	18.5

Never	3.9	10.9	12.3	16.7
Face-to-face contact grandchild-grandparent same sex/opposite lineage²				
Everyday or almost	11.0	7.9	34.4	23.6
Once a month or more often	45.0	35.5	40.9	34.9
Less often than once a month	13.0	12.5	13.4	13.4
Never	16.2	18.7	3.2	8.8
Deceased	14.8	25.4	8.2	19.5
Face-to-face contact grandchild-grandparent opposite sex/opposite lineage²				
Everyday or almost	8.1	10.8	23.8	34.3
Once a month or more often	34.9	45.7	34.1	42.5
Less often than once a month	12.0	13.3	13.0	13.2
Never	18.3	16.4	8.9	2.7
Deceased	26.7	13.7	20.2	7.3
Proximity grandchild-grandparent				
No proximity	25.5	31.1	31.7	34.2
Proximity	74.5	68.9	68.3	65.8
Proximity grandchild-grandparent same sex/opposite lineage²				
No proximity	29.7	27.4	25.4	26.7
Proximity	55.6	47.2	66.4	53.9
Deceased	14.8	25.4	8.2	19.4
Proximity grandchild-grandparent opposite sex/opposite lineage²				
No proximity	27.5	29.8	26.4	25.3
Proximity	45.8	56.4	53.3	67.4
Deceased	26.7	13.7	20.2	7.3

Note: Pearson chi-square reported are Designed-based.

Note: Data weighted for complex survey design. Scaled method to deal with singleton stratum.

Note: Maternal grandmother (6.5% observations dropped); Maternal grandfather (7.4% observations dropped); Paternal grandmother (7.8% observations dropped); Paternal grandfather (8.5% observations dropped).

1: Only if grandparent is alive.

Structure of family needs and opportunities and emotional closeness

Turning to the multivariate binary logistic regression models predicting emotional closeness between grandchildren aged approximately three years and their grandparents (Table 7), it is important to bear in mind that for each grandchild-grandparent dyad analysis, only children with a living grandparent were included. As a result, there has been differential attrition of the study sample for maternal and paternal grandparent dyads, and for grandmother and grandfather dyads. Therefore, the study analytic samples for the four dyads differ, as commented in the results of Table 6.

Also, it is important to address the high leverage points in the multivariate regression models, particularly in the grandchild-maternal grandmother dyad. These observations have atypical combinations of predictor values. The high leverage patterns tend to be comparably grandchildren living in families with rather high incomes, have less intense contact with the grandparent and live geographically distant to that grandparent. The high leverage observations in the maternal grandmother dyad can be largely explained by the atypical pattern of the frequency of face-to-face contact between the grandchild and that grandparent, with a higher than average number of observations of grandchildren in less than ‘everyday or almost’ with that grandparent, and grandchildren living geographically distant from the maternal grandmother.

Nevertheless, the results reported in table 7 suggest that consistently across each of the four grandchild-grandparent dyads, the grandparent has *lower* odds of closeness if the face-to-face contact is less often than ‘everyday or almost’; the odds are increasingly lower as intergenerational contact is less often. By contrast, other variables that were hypothesised have an influence on the opportunities for grandparents to develop an emotionally close relationship with the grandchild, such economic needs (i.e. poorer families are more in need of help or support which would lead to stronger intergenerational ties) or structural opportunities (i.e. grandparents who live geographically close are in a better of position to develop an emotionally close relationship) were only statistically significant for some grandchild-grandparent dyads and not others.

Sex of the grandchild. Table 7 shows that the sex of the child is not a statistically significant predictor of the affectionate ties between the grandchild and any of the four types of grandparents. The absence of any perceived difference in emotional closeness between male and female grandchildren and the four types of grandparents is somewhat more expected at the early ages of the grandchild, a time in the lifecourse in which gender socialisation is likely to have little effect on intergenerational relationships.

Age mother at birth. Table 7 shows that the age of the mother at child’s birth is not a statistically significant predictor of a perceived emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents when controlling for other covariates, except for

Table 7 Multivariate logistic regression analysis of children aged 3 whose mothers report closeness to each type of grandparent, by socio-structural individual and family aspects

	Maternal Grandmother		Maternal Grandfather		Paternal Grandmother		Paternal Grandfather	
	Odds ratios	C.I. [95%]	Odds ratios	C.I. [95%]	Odds ratios	C.I. [95%]	Odds ratios	C.I. [95%]
Sex of the grandchild								
Male (<i>ref.</i>)								
Female	0.930	[0.729,1.187]	0.994	[0.794,1.245]	0.944	[0.743,1.200]	1.092	[0.842,1.416]
Age of mother at birth of child								
30 and over (<i>ref.</i>)								
Under 20	0.951	[0.405,2.231]	1.315	[0.628,,2752]	0.763	[0.342,1.702]	0.525	[0.216,1.278]
20 to 30	0.972	[0.646,1.464]	0.930	[0.649,1.333]	0.655**	[0.495,0.866]	0.878	[0.660,1.169]
Mother's employment status								
Not working (<i>ref.</i>)								
Full-time	0.727	[0.421,1.255]	0.789	[0.516,1.209]	1.011	[0.680,1.504]	1.071	[0.686,1.674]
Part-time	0.847	[0.626,1.147]	0.887	[0.669,1.175]	0.978	[0.772,1.238]	0.964	[0.742,1.251]
Mother's education								
Degree or equivalent (<i>ref.</i>)								
Vocational below degree	0.731	[0.512,1.043]	0.500***	[0.352,0.710]	0.517***	[0.377,0.709]	0.540***	[0.396,0.737]
Higher grade or equivalent	0.628	[0.323,1.219]	0.565	[0.317,1.005]	0.832	[0.494,1.401]	0.849	[0.519,1.389]
Standard grade or equivalent	0.497**	[0.305,0.810]	0.499**	[0.326,0.764]	0.523**	[0.326,0.839]	0.635	[0.385,1.048]
No qualification	0.350**	[0.189,0.650]	0.453*	[0.236,0.868]	0.565	[0.277,1.151]	0.467*	[0.228,0.959]
Annual household income								
Bottom Quintile (<£8,410) (<i>ref.</i>)								
2nd Quintile (>=£8,410< £13,750)	1.745*	[1.047,2.909]	1.337	[0.849,2.106]	1.412	[0.937,2.127]	1.205	[0.721,2.014]
3rd Quintile (>=£13,750< £21,785)	2.221**	[1.353,3.646]	1.913*	[1.167,3.135]	1.672*	[1.088,2.569]	1.460	[0.904,2.359]
4th Quintile (>=£21,785< £33,571)	2.604***	[1.574,4.306]	1.347	[0.836,2.171]	1.689*	[1.116,2.556]	1.500	[0.918,2.451]
Top Quintile (>=£33,571)	3.261***	[1.775,5.990]	1.553	[0.895,2.695]	1.286	[0.756,2.186]	1.324	[0.720,2.432]
Number of siblings in household								
No siblings (<i>ref.</i>)								
One sibling	0.784	[0.525,1.170]	0.778	[0.567,1.066]	0.926	[0.709,1.209]	0.819	[0.607,1.105]
Two or more siblings	0.728	[0.487,1.090]	0.548**	[0.368,0.817]	0.542**	[0.387,0.777]	0.662*	[0.440,0.997]
Age of grandparent								
65+ (<i>ref.</i>)								
50 – 64	1.265	[0.914,1.751]	0.684*	[0.491,0.953]	1.409*	[1.059,1.874]	1.219	[0.946,1.571]
35 – 49	1.433	[0.784,2.620]	0.651	[0.337,1.256]	1.761	[0.981,3.162]	1.108	[0.538,2.283]
Face-to-face contact with this grandparent	<i>i.e. with mat. GM</i>		<i>i.e. with mat. GF</i>		<i>i.e. with pat. GM</i>		<i>i.e. with pat. GF</i>	

<i>Everyday or almost (ref:)</i>								
At least once a month	0.164***	[0.097,0.280]	0.241***	[0.164,0.353]	0.211***	[0.115,0.387]	0.256***	[0.138,0.473]
Less than once a month	0.015***	[0.008,0.030]	0.026***	[0.015,0.046]	0.040***	[0.020,0.078]	0.042***	[0.021,0.083]
Never	0.001***	[0.007,0.003]	0.003***	[0.001,0.004]	0.005***	[0.003,0.009]	0.006***	[0.003,0.011]
Proximity with this grandparent								
<i>(ref: not proximate)</i>	0.853	[0.522,1.394]	0.697*	[0.495,0.982]	1.606**	[1.137,2.267]	1.416*	[1.029,1.950]
Face-to-face contact GP same sex/opposite lineage								
	<i>i.e. with</i>		<i>i.e. with</i>		<i>i.e. with pat.</i>		<i>i.e. with mat.</i>	
	<i>pat. GM</i>		<i>mat. GF</i>		<i>GM</i>		<i>GF</i>	
<i>Everyday or almost (ref:)</i>								
At least once a month	0.973	[0.448,2.117]	0.878	[0.375,2.055]	2.168***	[1.402,3.354]	0.672	[0.426,1.061]
Less than once a month	3.544**	[1.392,9.024]	0.396*	[0.161,0.975]	2.930**	[1.504,5.709]	0.781	[0.364,1.676]
Never	1.986	[0.713,5.528]	1.211	[0.502,2.923]	4.380***	[2.117,9.066]	0.806	[0.390,1.666]
Deceased	2.876*	[1.079,7.662]	0.646	[0.255,1.636]	2.586*	[1.247,5.359]	0.976	[0.533,1.789]
Proximity grandparent same sex/opposite lineage (ref: not proximate)								
	1.924*	[1.128,3.282]	0.635	[0.379,1.066]	1.343	[0.8012,2.56]	0.928	[0.589,1.462]
Face-to-face contact GP opposite sex/opposite lineage								
	<i>i.e. with</i>		<i>i.e. with</i>		<i>i.e. with mat.</i>		<i>i.e. with mat.</i>	
	<i>pat. GM</i>		<i>mat. GF</i>		<i>GM</i>		<i>GF</i>	
<i>Everyday or almost (ref:)</i>								
At least once a month	2.085	[0.874,4.973]	1.856	[0.954,3.612]	0.875	[0.565,1.357]	2.164***	[1.424,3.288]
Less than once a month	1.123	[0.456,2.762]	3.842***	[1.848,7.989]	0.839	[0.420,1.677]	2.274*	[1.170,4.417]
Never	1.881	[0.682,5.188]	2.042	[0.968,4.309]	1.166	[0.619,2.196]	2.774*	[1.133,6.796]
Deceased	1.379	[0.558,3.403]	2.993**	[1.458,6.141]	0.667	[0.372,1.198]	1.529	[0.807,2.897]
Proximity grandparent opposite sex/opposite lineage(ref: not proximate)								
	0.667	[0.345,1.287]	1.786*	[1.149,2.776]	0.671	[0.423,1.064]	0.823	[0.511,1.328]
Observations	3,442		2,732		2,840		2,182	

Note: Weighted data. Exponentiated coefficients.

Significance levels: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Note: Maternal grandmother (6.7% observations dropped); maternal grandfather (7.4% missing values); paternal grandmother (7.8% missing values); paternal grandfather (8.6% missing values).

Maternal grandmother: Standardized residuals <3: 81 observations; High leverage (3 times mean): 239 observations.

Maternal grandfather: Standardized residuals <3: 85 observations; High leverage (3 times mean): 72 observations.

Paternal grandmother: Standardized residuals <3: 69 observations; High leverage (3 times mean): 48 observations.

Paternal grandfather: Standardized residuals <3: 50 observations; High leverage (3 times mean): 43 observations.

paternal grandmothers. Grandchildren's closeness to paternal grandmothers is statistically significantly associated with the child's mother being 20 to 30 years-old when she gave birth to the study child, relative to older than 30, that is lower odds of being perceived as emotionally close among the group of children with older mothers (OR 0.655) compared to children with an old mother.

Mothers' employment status and highest educational level. The employment status of the mother is also found to be not associated with emotional closeness between grandchildren and any of the four grandparents in the multivariate analysis. However, the results of the analysis of mother's highest education qualification show a significant association for some categories but not others. Relative to grandchildren with a mother with degree or equivalent, grandchildren of mothers with no educational qualification have statistically significantly lower odds of being perceived as close with the maternal grandparents. These grandchildren had about 65% (OR 0.350) lower the odds of being perceived emotionally close to the maternal grandmother compared to children of a mother with a degree or equivalent, and about 55% (OR 0.453) lower the odds in the grandchild-maternal grandfather dyad. Also, the odds of mothers perceiving closeness to the grandparent were lower among those children with a mother with a standard grade or equivalent 50% (OR 0.497), 50% (OR 0.499) and 47% (OR 0.523) for maternal grandmothers and grandfathers, and paternal grandmothers, respectively compared to those with a mother with a degree.

The odds were also statistically significant lower among children of mothers with a vocational qualification below degree relative to children with the highest educational qualification, roughly 50% (OR 0.500), 48% (OR 0.517) and 46% (OR 0.540) lower the odds for maternal grandfathers, paternal grandmothers and grandfathers respectively. In summary, there is a consistency across all four dyads for lower odds of emotional closeness across all categories of education lower than degree, but not always statistically significantly so.

Household income. The multivariate analysis (Table 7) shows that the reverse situation applies for household income, with the odds of being perceived as emotionally close to the grandparent among grandchildren tending to be higher for children living in families with household income above the lowest quintile, but not always statistically

significant higher. For maternal grandmothers the association with income is statistically significant for all four income categories, relative to the lowest quintile, and the association is also strongest (in size of OR), ranging from 1.7 for 2nd quintile to 3.3 for top quintile). For the other three grandchild-grandparent dyads, the ORs are all positive but constrained between 1 and 1.7. These results, for the multivariate analysis are opposite to the predicted relationship foreseeing greater solidarity from grandparents towards their grandchildren living in economically deprived households leading to stronger intergenerational affective ties.

Number of siblings. The number of siblings in the household at all was associated with less emotional closeness for all four grandchild-grandparent dyads, but there was statistical significance only for those grandchildren with two or more siblings living in the household for each type of grandparents except for maternal grandmothers. Surprisingly, the results indicate the reverse of what was expected, that is, that grandchildren would have a stronger affective bond in households with several children as family needs for childcare are expected to be higher, which would prompt stronger intergenerational solidarity and lead to closer ties between grandchildren and grandparents. Instead, the results of the model (Table 7) show that grandchildren with two or more siblings decrease the odds of mothers perceiving an emotionally close relationship of the grandchild to her/his maternal grandfather and paternal grandparents compared to those children with no siblings. The odds were statistically significant lower among grandchildren with two or more siblings relative to grandchildren with no siblings, roughly 45% (OR 0.548), 46% (OR 0.542) and 34% (OR 0.662) lower the odds for maternal grandfathers, paternal grandmothers and grandfathers respectively. Thus, greater childcare needs derived from more siblings in the households is not associated with greater chances of intergenerational emotional closeness. Instead, functional exchanges of help and support in families with 2 or more siblings might lead to greater tensions for childminding affecting the enablement of an emotionally close relationship.

Age of grandparent. The age of the grandparent at all was only associated with intergenerational emotional closeness for some of the four grandchild-grandparent dyads. Maternal grandfathers were about 30% less close (OR 0.684) if aged 50-64 relative to grandchildren who had maternal grandfathers older than 65. Older maternal

grandfathers might have more chances to interact with their grandchildren when they are older as they might have stopped working compared to their younger counterparts who are likely in a paid job that severs their availability to spend time with their grandchildren and enable an emotionally close relationship. Also, the odds of a grandchild having a close relationship with a younger grandparent was statistically significant for paternal grandmothers, with 41% higher the odds (OR 1.409) of mothers perceiving an emotionally close relationship between her child and paternal grandmothers aged 50-64 relative to older grandmothers (i.e. 65 and over). Older paternal grandmothers might be less physically capable of participating in the life of their grandchildren given the large age gap existing between generations.

Grandchild-grandparent frequency of face-to-face contact. The results in table 7 show the strong effect of the low intensity of contact (i.e. less frequent than 'less than everyday or almost') or lack of face-to-face contact between the grandchild and each of the four types of grandparents on developing an emotionally close relationship between them. In each of the four grandchild-grandparent dyads the odds of mothers perceiving an emotionally close relationship between that grandparent and her child decreases ordinally according to the extent that the frequency of face-to-face contact between that grandparent and the grandchild is less than 'everyday or almost', very substantially if there is 'never' such contact. The odds were statistically significant lower among grandchildren whose contact with the grandparent was 'at least once a month' relative to grandchildren whose contact was 'everyday or almost' roughly 83% (OR 0.164), 76% (0.241), 79% (0.211) and 75% (0.256) for maternal grandmothers, maternal grandfathers, paternal grandmothers and paternal grandfathers respectively. The odds were also statistically significant lower among grandchildren who see their grandparents 'less than once a month', roughly between 98% and 96% depending on the dyad. Finally, these odds were even lower, more than 99% for any grandchild-grandparent dyads, among grandchildren who 'never' see the grandparent relative to those who see them daily or almost, signalling a virtual inexistence of a close relationship when they do not see each other at all.

Geographical proximity of living between grandchild and grandparents. In the paternal grandchild-grandparent dyads only is the existence of geographical propinquity between grandchildren and their grandparents that predicts the existence

of emotional closeness between generations. The odd ratios of mothers perceiving emotional closeness between the youngest and oldest generation are strongly statistically significant and higher for grandchildren whose grandparent is living geographically proximate compared to those who live distant. The analysis for paternal grandmothers show that the odds of a mother reporting emotional closeness of her child with the paternal grandmother is almost 61% higher (OR 1.606) if that grandmother is geographically proximate. For grandchildren whose paternal grandfather does live nearby the odds of emotionally close is 41% higher (OR 1.416) than children with a geographically close grandfather. Thus, propinquity between generations can make a difference for grandchildren and grandparents to form an emotional tie between them, although this effect is found only for the paternal grandchild-grandparent dyads, pointing to a matrilineal advantage of intergenerational relationships.

All in all, among the indicators used to capture differences in emotional closeness by family needs and opportunities for interaction between grandchildren and grandparents, face-to-face contact of grandchildren with grandparents is the strongest predictor of the variations in closeness for any of the four separate analyses. This may in part arise from some sort of halo effect on the of the child's mother's *reporting* of her child's closeness to that grandparent, arising via her perception of her only relationship with that grandparent. Or it may be logistical – if the mother seldom sees the grandparent, there will tend to be scant opportunities for the 3-year-old child to have contact with the grandparent, and form a close relationship.

Also, although to a lesser extent, the annual household income, the number of siblings in the household and the age of the grandparent. By contrast, sex of the grandchild, the mother's employment status and age of mother at grandchild's birth were poor predictors of emotional closeness between any set of grandchildren and the 'focus' grandparent.

Linked lives and emotional closeness

Table 7 also shows the results of the effects of intergenerational face-to-face contact and geographical propinquity of grandparents of the opposite lineage on the emotional

closeness between grandparents and grandchildren. As can be seen in Table 7 the frequency of face-to-face contact between maternal grandmothers and grandchildren is strongly associated with emotional closeness on the grandchild-paternal grandmother and grandfather dyads. In fact, grandchildren who have less than daily face-to-face contact with the maternal grandmother (or have a deceased grandmother) had more than double the odds of having an emotionally close relationship with their paternal grandmother compared to those who have daily contact with the maternal grandmother. In the grandchild-paternal grandmother dyad the increase was of double (OR 2.168) the odds of having an emotionally close relationship among those who had contact '*at least once a month*' with the maternal grandmother relative to children who had daily contact, and these odds were close to four-and-a-half times (OR 4.380) if the grandchild had '*never*' contact with the maternal grandmother relative to daily contact. Similar patterns are found for the grandchild-paternal grandfather dyad, with 2.2 (OR 2.164) times the odds of grandchildren being perceived as 'close' if the grandchild had only contact '*at least once a month*' relative to daily, and 2.7 (OR 2.774) times if the grandchild had contact '*never*' with the maternal grandmother relative to those who had daily or almost daily contact.

Geographical proximity of grandparents to the grandchild's house showed a mixed pattern of associations with emotional closeness grandparents of other sex/lineage, most of these being non-significantly different from null. However, geographical non-proximity of paternal grandmother was associated with higher the odds of having an emotionally close relationship between the grandchild and the maternal grandmother by 92% (OR 1.924), and between the grandchild and maternal grandfather by 78.6% (OR 1.786), compared to grandchildren whose paternal grandmother was living geographically distant.

Overall, the results from the bottom section of table 7 show that among the contact and proximity indicators used to capture the effects of intergenerational interconnectedness on emotional closeness, the strongest predictor for closeness with a particular grandparent is the frequency of face-to-face contact with that grandparent, albeit this association is slightly less strong for grandfathers than grandmothers, and slightly less strong for paternal line grandparents than maternal.

Closeness with a particular grandparent, was also modelled on contact with and proximity of the other three grandparents, and significant associations were found only in respect of paternal grandparents, with strongly increased odds of closeness if there was less than frequent contact with the maternal grandmother. Also, the odds of closeness with maternal grandmothers and grandfathers were lowered if the paternal grandmother was living geographically close, but no similar effect was found in any of the two paternal grandparent dyads. In summary, the inclusion of predictors of family interconnectedness is only partly helpful in explaining variations of closeness in the relationship between grandchildren and their grandparents.

Discussion of the findings

The main aim of this chapter has been to explore the extent to which the structure of family needs and opportunities for interaction and grandparents' involvement in the life of the grandchild help enact a sense of closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents. The multivariate analysis assessed the relationship between a series of socio-demographic, structural and associational factors related to the child's mother perception of an emotionally close grandchild-grandparent relationship for four different types of grandparents. Overall, the findings show that intergenerational face-to-face contact played a key part in understanding variability in emotional closeness between grandchildren and each of the four grandparent types. The next sections discuss these findings, drawing on key theoretical frameworks and ideas that are used to interpret the results.

Intergenerational solidarity and emotional closeness

The results clearly show that grandchildren's emotional closeness to any of the four different types of grandparents was best predicted by associational and structural dimensions of family life, rather than functional and other individually-related aspects. Intergenerational face-to-face contact between grandchildren and their grandparents and, to a lesser extent, geographical proximity of living between generations were particularly useful in predicting differences in the mothers' sense of an emotionally close relationship between grandchildren and their grandparents.

The multivariate regression models show that despite the existence of close emotional ties in some of the dimensions of intergenerational solidarity between grandchildren and the four types of grandparents, this link was not always as expected by the intergenerational solidarity model. Instead, grandchild-grandparent relationships are often filled with ambivalent situations. Although previous studies found that grandparents are more likely to have contact and provide support in those families with greater needs of help and support for childcare (Koslowski, 2009, Gray, 2005), the multivariate regression models showed that greater functional family needs do not necessarily lead to stronger emotional ties between grandchildren and their grandparents. Children living in families with a greater annual household income were associated with a higher perception by mothers of an emotionally close relationship between her child and each of the four types of grandparents compared to children living in the poorest families, although this was only observable in the grandchild-maternal grandmother dyad. In addition, children with two or more siblings were associated with lower odds of an emotionally close relationship than children with no siblings, albeit this was only the case for maternal grandfathers and paternal grandmothers. Differences in the effects of functional needs of families on enabling the development of emotional close ties for each grandchild-grandparent dyad suggest that family relationships are more complex than normatively assumed intergenerational behaviours oriented towards intergenerational transfers. Interestingly, for some grandchild-grandparent dyads functional solidarity is inversely associated with affectual ties.

The intergenerational solidarity model has little explanatory power to capture ambivalent situations in grandchild-grandparent relationships embedded in wider family and social arrangements. Instead, we must turn to the intergenerational ambivalence model (Luescher and Pillemer, 1998) for some elucidation of contradictions between family needs and the children's mother perception of emotional closeness in grandchild-grandparent relationships. The concept of 'sociological ambivalence' (Connidis, 2015) can help elucidate the ambivalent situation characterised by greater needs for family solidarity and more difficulties on enabling close emotional ties between generations within a family. Drawing on empirical research, it can be argued that greater family needs can lead to tensions and

strains between family members; in such familial circumstances, particularly in low-income families, grandparents often dedicate more time and energy in the care of grandchildren (Gray, 2005). In this context, the findings in this chapter suggest that tensions derived from greater family needs –functional solidarity- create strains in the relationship between multiple generations within a family, and, in turn, affect the perception of emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents.

The intensity of face-to-face contact between grandchildren and their grandparents is particularly key in understanding how emotional closeness is enacted in grandchild-grandparents. The results indicate that the mothers' perception of a sense of closeness between the grandchildren and their grandparents was largely driven by the actual involvement of grandparents in the life of the grandchild (associational solidarity). Children who had only occasional or no contact were found to have lower emotional ties with any of the four types of grandparents. This finding aligns with the intergenerational solidarity model and finds support in other studies on grandparenting. It is likely that more intense contact between grandchildren and grandparents is partly contingent upon the quality of the relationship between the oldest and the middle generations. Since grandchildren in their early ages are unlikely to independently arrange visits with their grandparents, it is safe to assume that grandchild-grandparent face-to-face contact is done between grandparents and the child's parents. The parent as mediator of the grandchild-grandparent relationship has resonance in a wide range of intergenerational studies (e.g. Gladstone, 1988, Johnson, 1998, Silverstein and Marengo, 2001), and previous research has found significant effects for the interaction between the middle and oldest generation and higher chances of intergenerational closeness between grandchildren and grandparents (Hodgson, 1992, Kennedy, 1992, Block, 2000). One reason that may help explain the relevance of intergenerational contact between the middle and oldest generations in explaining variations in emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents is that contact between mothers and grandparents facilitate the access of grandparents to a more frequent contact with grandchildren. The concept of 'linked lives' (Elder, 1981, Elder, 1998) helps us to analytically consider family relationships across various generations within a family. Thus, the child's mother acts as a generational bridge shaping the opportunities for grandparents to get involved in the life of grandchildren,

which altogether impacts on the possibilities of enacting an emotionally close grandchild-grandparent relationship. Interestingly, the link between grandchild-grandparent face-to-face contact and grandparent-adult child relationships reveals the importance of considering various aspects of multiple generations in families on developing emotional close ties between grandchildren and their grandparents, and not exclusively the relational pair. Also, it adds to the intergenerational solidarity model that limits the analytical scope of intergenerational relationships to one dyad, rather than allowing consideration of the characteristics and circumstances of various generations and relationships within the same family.

Grandchildren who live geographically close to their grandparents had higher odds of being perceived by their mother as having an emotionally close relationship with the grandparent compared to those grandchildren living geographically distant, albeit this was only observable for the two grandchild-paternal grandparent dyads. However, in the grandchild-maternal grandfather dyad I found a negative effect between geographical propinquity and emotional closeness, and a similar (though not significant) negative trend was found for the grandchild-maternal grandmother. This finding points at the importance and ambivalence of structural opportunities for interaction between the grandchild and their grandparents to develop an emotionally close relationship, and it is particularly interesting that maternal grandfathers' geographical proximity was negatively associated with the development of emotional close ties with the grandchild. One reason for this finding could be that negative feelings are developed and mount over the pressures of geographical proximity and a desire of mothers for a greater autonomy from their own parents. By contrast, this geographical closeness might be differently perceived by the mothers as a positive influence for the grandchild's paternal grandparents who might be less inclined to interfere in the daily life of grandchildren.

Gender and lineage of grandparents and emotional closeness

Rather than emphasising gendered emotionalities, the results of the analyses with four different grandchild-grandparent dyads show that grandfathers also develop a close emotional connection with the grandchild. Previous research on emotional closeness

between generations in families has found stronger links between grandchildren and maternal grandmothers compared to other grandparents (Hodgson, 1992, Kennedy, 1992). Differences in emotional closeness by gender of the grandparent were also found in a national survey in the US, which found significant differences between grandmothers and grandfathers, with grandmothers being more likely to be perceived by grandchildren as emotionally close compared to grandfathers (Silverstein and Marenco, 2001). However, much of the literature explains these differences based on traditional gender roles in which women are the kin-keepers and perform activities that are valued as significant for the enactment of emotional closeness.

In this context, the results of the analyses of each of the four grandchild-grandparent dyads indicate that emotional closeness between grandchildren and both maternal and paternal grandmothers and grandfathers are shaped by similar aspects of the structure of family needs and opportunities for interaction, as well as the actual involvement of grandparents in the grandchild's life. However, it has not been possible to directly compare between each of the four grandparent dyads the extent to which each of these variables influences the mothers' perception of emotional closeness of grandchild-grandparent relationships. Yet, these aspects cannot be overlooked in understanding the processes through which emotional closeness is developed between grandchildren and grandparents, and how gender and lineage relations shape emotional closeness between grandparents and grandchildren.

The findings in this chapter run counter to traditional views of gender differences structured by their role in the family. Thus, women (grandmothers and mothers) cannot be simply considered to be the 'kin-keepers' (Roberto et al., 2001) that do all the 'emotion work' (Hochschild, 1979) to keep the family ties together while men have an instrumental or more practical role. Instead, this chapter aligns with research on grandfathering (Mann, 2007, Mann et al., 2016) that indicates that grandfathers are not systematically emotionally detached from their grandchildren and can form strong emotional ties with them.

Kinship networks and emotional closeness

The results of each of the four grandchild-grandparent dyads show, only to some limited extent, that the effects of the intergenerational contact and geographical proximity of living do not stop in the grandchild-grandparent dyad, but they extend to the relationship between parents and grandparents in each of the grandchild's lineage. The 'connectedness' (Smart, 2007) of family life has been captured through the concept of 'linked lives' (Elder, 1998), which emphasises the interconnection between the lifecourse of grandchildren, parents and grandparents. As already mentioned, the adult child-grandparent bond is crucial in the social contact between the two non-adjacent generations (Mahne and Huxhold, 2012), but there has been no scholarly consideration of the structure of opportunities for interaction and possibilities to enable emotional closeness that one side of the grandchild's grandparents exercise over the other.

The results of the empirical analysis show the positive influence of infrequent or lack of face-to-face contact between the grandchild and maternal grandmothers on enabling an emotionally close relationship between the grandchild and her/his paternal grandparents. However, in the grandchild-paternal grandparent dyads, this effect was not found for any of the two maternal grandparent dyads. The effects of gender and lineage relations are visible in this analysis of the multiple intersecting opportunities across family generations and emotional closeness. In fact, grandfathers' geographical proximity and face-to-face contact between grandchildren and grandparents have little effect on the other grandparents' opportunities for enabling a sense of closeness with the grandchild. By contrast, the results show that the grandchild's maternal grandmothers have higher opportunities to enable a close relationship with the grandchild if the paternal grandmother is geographically close. The importance of acknowledging the influence of the broader kinship network on close relationships between grandchildren and grandparents helps to foreground the relational character of family life and situate grandchild-grandparent emotional ties within a wider kinship network.

In summary, the present chapter finds some support for the intergenerational solidarity model, although it shows that grandchild-grandparent emotional relationships are also

defined by ambivalence. Most importantly, the analysis of emotional closeness between grandchildren and grandparents foregrounded that these emotional ties are constructed upon the possibilities of grandparents to interact with and provide support to their grandchildren and the actual involvement in their life. In particular, face-to-face contact is key to understand variability in grandparent-grandchild relationships. Moreover, grandchildren emotional closeness to grandparents is also influenced by the intensity of face-to-face contact with grandparents of the opposite lineage, although this effect has a gender and family lineage component. A high intensity of contact between maternal grandmothers and the grandchild negatively affects the enactment of an emotionally close relationship between paternal grandmothers and grandfathers with that grandchild.

The results of the multivariate models provide some support for understanding the effects of the interconnection of opportunities across the grandchild's whole network of grandparents in enabling emotional close relationships between the youngest and oldest generations; it also suggests variability across and within families. Turning attention to the individual and contextual circumstances surrounding the relationship between grandchildren and grandparents is an important step to move away from conceptualisations of grandparents' role as homogenous or encapsulated into a style based on the salient aspects of the role enactment (Cherlin and Furstenberg, 1985). Also, treating emotional closeness as an outcome variable shifts the conceptualisation of grandparenthood from a role in the social structure, and advocates for a relational stance in which a social relationship can capture dynamic changes and tensions and contradictions in family life that shape emotional bonds between grandparents and grandchildren.

Chapter Six

Parental and grandparental divorce and emotional closeness

Introduction

The previous chapter examined the extent to which the structure of family needs and opportunities for interaction influences the grandchildren's mothers' perception of a close relationship between grandchildren and their grandparents. The results showed that the structure of opportunities, captured by the frequency of intergenerational contact and geographical proximity of living, was associated with emotional closeness of grandchild-grandparent relationships, as well as aspects of the structure of family needs such as low household income and a higher number of grandchildren in the household had a negative influence on close relational ties. Importantly, it demonstrated that the structure of opportunities for interaction is key in the patterns of closeness in the grandchild-grandparent relationship, particularly showing the centrality of the mother-grandparent relationship in enhancing or hindering close relationships in other generational family relationships.

This chapter examines whether parental and grandparental divorce or separation explains the differences in emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents. The analysis seeks to scrutinise whether and under what individual, relational and material circumstances divorce or separation in the family impact upon the development of an emotional close relationship between grandchildren and grandparents, and whether there are differences between gender and family lineage of grandparents. A brief overview of the literature and the theoretical framework guiding the results precedes the presentation and discussion of the findings.

Literature Review

The literature on the links between grandparent-grandchild relationships and marital breakdown often situate grandparents as crucial agents in helping and supporting mothers and their children following parental divorce or separation (see a

comprehensive review in chapter 1). The idea of grandparents as ‘family rescuers’ (Szinovacz, 1998) had resonance amid growing concerns of the effects of parental divorce and separation in the well-being of children (Mooney et al., 2009). More importantly, marital or couple breakdown often leads to a renegotiation of family obligations and responsibilities (Douglas and Ferguson, 2003). As a result, the nature of family relationships and ties between family members might be considerably transformed.

Empirical research evidence indicates that new residential and social arrangements in ‘family life’ following marital breakdown have implications in the relational possibilities of grandparents to access their grandchildren and sustain a close relationship with them (Dench and Ogg, 2002, Lussier et al., 2002). Parental custodial rights are likely to create imbalances in the opportunities grandparents have to participate in the life of their grandchildren. As amply noted, the child’s mother is in the large majority of cases the custodial parent in the event of separation or divorce (e.g. Dench and Ogg, 2002), and this has important consequences in the grandparent-grandchild relationship. For example, the study of Chan and Elder (2000a) found that mothers are more likely to turn to their own mothers for help and support as a result of better quality ties, and situates maternal grandmothers in a better position to frequently interact with their daughter’s children. Maternal grandparents, and particularly maternal grandmothers, are found to strengthen the ties with children and grandchildren following parental divorce (Ferguson et al., 2004, Douglas and Ferguson, 2003), which strengthens the notion of a ‘matrilineal advantage’ in intergenerational family relationships, particularly in the event of parental divorce or separation (Lussier et al., 2002). By contrast, divorce of the child’s parents has strong negative effects on the feelings of closeness and contact between grandchildren and paternal grandparents, in particular paternal grandfathers (Dench and Ogg, 2002).

What is interesting is that these findings suggest that the grandparent-grandchild relationship is mediated by the middle or parental generation which regulates the access and shapes the opportunities of grandparents to actively participate in the life of their grandchildren (Bridges et al., 2007) and the closeness in grandparent-grandchild relationships as a result of stronger and better quality ties between the

mother and the grandparent (Monserud, 2008). However, some evidence points that the key aspect in the grandparent-grandchild relationship following parental divorce is the loss of the parent-child relationship, often preceded by tensions and conflicts in the relationship between mothers and fathers (Ferguson et al., 2004). Yet, grandparents whose child has lost contact with the grandchild might resist to lose contact with the grandchild and attempt to maintain the contact despite the new family arrangement and the tensions between parents (Timonen and Doyle, 2012).

Most of the research on the effects of marital breakdown on grandparent-grandchild relationships has largely overlooked other family transitions such as marital breakdown between grandparents, and the effects it has on the nature and extent of the relationship with their adult children and grandchildren, including its effects on the feelings of closeness. However, the empirical evidence on this front indicates that grandparents' divorce has also an impact on the extent to which grandparents participate in the life of grandchildren. For instance, King (2003a) found lower feelings of contact and closeness between grandparents and their grandchildren among divorced grandparents compared to those in intact couples. The negative effects of grandparental divorce ameliorated when controlled for the quality of the bond between grandparents and parents. The same study also found differences in the effects of divorce between maternal and paternal grandparents, with the latter group having significantly lower chances of being close to their grandchild than their lineage counterparts.

The acknowledgement in the literature of the effects of divorce on intergenerational relationships between grandchildren and grandparents provides little insight into the effects of both of these transitions in the development of emotional closeness between grandchildren and grandparents. In addition, most of the research has focussed upon the relationship with young or adult grandchildren rather than grandchildren in their early years. In this chapter I examine the effects of marital breakdown of both the middle and older generations on emotional closeness between grandchildren in their early ages and their grandparents.

Theoretical framework

In this chapter I combine ideas and key concepts of the intergenerational solidarity and ambivalence model and the life course approach to examine the effects of divorce or separation in the parental and grandparental generations on emotional closeness. Through the lens of the life course approach (Elder et al., 2003) marital breakdown is understood as a powerful transition that substantially alters individual biographies and family relationships reshaping roles and structures. Thus, the principle of '*linked lives*' may be better suited to enhance our understanding of how experiences of marital divorce in the parental generation affects the relationship between parents, grandparents and grandchildren. Equally, the divorce in the grandparental generation of either or both lineages has potential consequences on the grandparent-grandchild relationships. Importantly, marital breakdown may occur on more than one generation in a family triggering a series of relational, practical and material changes that affect the relationships between the various individuals across generations within a family. Nonetheless, life transitions are not homogenous and might affect individuals in a diversity of ways (Casper and Bianchi, 2002). However, the life course approach does not provide an indication in the way transitions affect the life of individuals, particularly the differences in emotional closeness found between grandchildren and their maternal and paternal grandparents.

One way to understand this variability in the effects of marital breakdown is found in the principles of the intergenerational solidarity model (Bengtson and Roberts, 1991). This model suggests that the strength of affective ties in intergenerational relationships is explained by the strength of the ties in each of the dimensions of solidarity such as the associational and structural. Thus, marital divorce or separation can potentially influence the solidarity between generations, and, consequently, enhance or hinder the development of emotional ties between grandchildren and their grandparents. The most evident consequence of marital separation is in the area of custodial and visitation rights, which shape temporal and spatial opportunities between the non-resident parents and their children, but also the opportunities of the non-resident's parent's parents.

Importantly, the impact of divorce on intergenerational affective ties is intersected by gender and lineage. According to various scholars the kin-keeping role of women explains the stronger emotional ties between grandchildren and grandmothers, even in the event of divorce or separation (Chan and Elder, 2000b, Cooney and Smith, 1996). The matrilineal advantage is accentuated in favour of the maternal side as typically the mothers retain custodial rights, which affects the opportunities of parental grandparents to sustain an emotionally close relationship.

There is certain contestation on the extent to which gender and lineage are crucial aspects in explaining closer ties between grandchildren and grandparents (Uhlenberg and Hammill, 1998). Other explanations of the diversity of effects of marital breakdown point to the disengagement of fathers in the life of their children as the main cause of the disadvantage of paternal grandparents to continue a regular involvement in the life of their grandchildren (Kruk and Hall, 1995). Other scholars have focused on the *conflict* arising from parental divorce to explain changes in the contact between grandchildren and grandparents (Dench and Ogg, 2002, Gladstone, 1988). However, negative effects of parental divorce on the chances of contact and closeness can be offset by maintaining a good quality of bonds in intergenerational relationships between the custodial parent and the grandparent (King, 2003b). Recent qualitative research showed that grandparents attempt to maintain strong ties with grandchildren, particularly paternal grandparents, following the divorce of the grandchild's parents (Timonen and Doyle, 2012) rather than having a 'mediated' (Gladstone, 1988) relationship through the mother of the child. While gender and lineage are important social aspects that structure the capacity of involvement of grandparents in the life of grandchildren, the agency of grandparents cannot be understated in maintaining strong bonds with parents.

Research Questions

This chapter focuses on the impact of the grandchild's parents and grandparents' divorce or separation on the mothers' perception of emotional closeness between grandchildren and four types of grandparents.

RQ3: Does divorce/separation of parents and grandparents explain variations in the mothers' perception of emotional closeness of children and their grandparents? Is there a double (dis)advantage on intergenerational closeness in families with both divorced parents and grandparents?

Drawing on the principle of 'linked lives' of the lifecourse approach, it is hypothesised that marital breakdown transform family relationships across and within generations in a family, which influence the opportunities and transform the possibilities to enact an emotionally close relationship between grandchildren and their grandparents. It is hypothesised that because individual and family lives are linked together the emotional closeness between grandchildren and grandparents will be differently influenced by the parental divorce or separation. It is expected that strains and conflict between partners has consequences in the relationship between grandchildren and grandparents. Following this argumentation, it is expected that the effects of parental divorce or separation on intergenerational affective ties will be negative when compared to grandchildren living in an intact couple household. Nonetheless, because of the kin-keeping role of women together with a 'matrifocal tilt' in family relationships, the effects of marital breakdown on intergenerational emotional closeness are expected to have a greater positive impact on grandmothers compared to grandfathers. In addition, it is hypothesised that due to the 'matrilineal advantage' in family relationships, maternal grandparents will experience positive effects following the divorce or separation of the child's parents on the affective ties with the grandchild. Alternatively, paternal grandparents, especially paternal grandfathers are expected that marital divorce will have a negative impact in their relationship with the mother of the child and the grandchild, with the result of weaker emotional ties compared to paternal grandfathers whose son is not divorced.

Also, it is expected that grandparents' divorce has a negative effect on the emotional closeness between the divorced grandparents and the grandchild as strained relationships may reduce the opportunities for contact with the grandchild. However, due to the female kin-keeping role of women it is assumed that grandmothers will have a greater emotional closeness with their grandchild compared to grandfathers, and the matrilineal advantage of family relationships will explain the greater chances of

maternal grandparents compared to their paternal counterparts. Thus, it is expected that divorce of paternal grandparents will decrease emotional closeness with the grandchild, particularly for paternal grandfathers. In addition, it is expected that grandchildren would be perceived as less close in families with divorced parents and grandparents as conflict is more likely to strain relationships, a double disadvantage that would decrease the chances of grandparents forming a close relationship with the grandchild. However, due to women's kin-keeping role and matrilineal advantage, it is expected that the bond between the grandchild and maternal grandmothers will be greater than any other grandparent, but strong negative effects are assumed for grandfathers, particularly paternal grandfathers.

Binary Logistic Regression

The binary logistic regression models used to explore the effects of parental and grandparental divorce or separation on the grandchild-grandparent emotional relationship are presented here. The indicator of parental divorce is a derived variable using family composition and information on re-partnering. The independent variable of interest in this chapter, 'parental divorce', is a binary variable indicating grandchildren in intact couples, with both biological parents, and grandchildren of separated or divorced parents (further details can be found in chapter 4). The second variable of interest in this chapter is 'grandparental divorce'. Similar to the previous variable, this is a binary variable indicating the number of children in the GUS survey (BC1) whose grandparents are divorced (see chapter 4 for more details).

The two variables of couple or marital breakdown in the middle and old generation are jointly analysed in the multivariate logistic regression model for each relational dyad between the grandchild and the four types of grandparents. Each grandchild-grandparent dyad also controls for a series indicators of socio-demographics of the family of the grandchild. These variables have been closely examined in the previous chapter (Chapter 5) such as the child's sex, annual household income, mother's employment status, age of mother at birth, number of siblings in the household, as well as the grandparents' age, and indicators of structural solidarity indicated by

grandparent's geographical proximity of living, and associational solidarity indicated by whether mothers are in contact with the grandparent.

The four regression models, one for each grandchild-grandparent dyad, are based on cross-sectional data collected in sweep 3 of the Birth Cohort 1 of the GUS study. The mothers of the 'study child' were interviewed between 2005 and 2006 when the child was aged approximately 3 years. The equation for each grandchild-grandparent dyad are specified in Appendix H.

Findings

Table 8 shows the frequency distribution of the two variables of interest in this chapter, that is parental and grandparental divorce or separation, for the children in the GUS study aged approximately three years, and each of the four types of grandparents. The percentage of observations dropped using *casewise deletion* is 7.5% in the analytic sample of the grandchild-maternal grandmother; 7.5% in the case of maternal grandfathers; 8.8% for the grandchild-paternal grandmother; and 8.8% in the paternal grandfather subsample. The analytic samples of grandmothers and grandfathers by lineage are directly comparable with each other; these samples only include cases in which both grandparents are alive at the time of the interview. In summary, table 8 shows that children in each of the subsamples have parents and grandparents that have never divorced or separated at the time the child was three-years-old. The percentage of children with their parents divorced in the two maternal grandchild-grandparent dyads is almost a fifth of the total (19.8%). Conversely, the two grandchild-paternal grandparent dyads present a radically different picture given the differences in the analytic samples. For the two paternal grandparents slightly less than 5% of children were living with a divorced or separated parent. It is clear that the analytic samples by lineage of the grandparent markedly differ from each other.

The frequency distribution of children with divorced grandparents (table 8) in each of the four grandparent dyads shows a relative large incidence of this lifecourse event in both lineages of the grandparents. A little over a quarter of children aged approximately three years (27.8%) had a divorced maternal grandmother and grandfather at the time of the interview (2005-2006). Turning to the dyads with the

paternal grandmother and grandfather as many as 21.7% of children had a divorced paternal grandparent. It is particularly remarkable the differences in the paternal grandparents' subsamples between the incidence of divorce or separation of the child's parents and grandparents. The small number of children with a divorced parent in the paternal grandparents' sample is of concern to draw conclusions about the effects of parental divorce on intergenerational emotional closeness between grandchildren and their paternal grandmothers and grandfathers.

Table 8 Univariate descriptive statistics of divorce or separation of the children's mother and grandparents at age 3 of the grandchild by type of grandparent, Birth Cohort 1 (%)

Variable name and categories	Maternal grandmother ¹	Maternal grandfather ¹	Paternal grandmother ¹	Paternal grandfather ¹
	(N= 2,729)	(N= 2,729)	(N= 2,181)	(N= 2,181)
Parental divorce				
Not mentioned	80.2	80.2	95.5	95.5
Mentioned	19.8	19.8	4.5	4.5
Grandparental divorce				
Not mentioned	72.2	72.2	78.3	78.3
Mentioned	27.8	27.8	21.7	21.7

Note: Pearson chi-square reported are Designed-based.

Note: Data weighted for complex survey design. Scaled method to deal with singleton stratum.

Note: Maternal grandmother (7.5% observations dropped); Maternal grandfather (7.5% observations dropped); Paternal grandmother (8.8 % observations dropped); Paternal grandfather (8.8 % observations dropped).

1: Only if the grandparent and her/his partner are alive.

Findings of the multivariate analysis

Parental divorce or separation and emotional closeness

Table 9 shows the results of the four multivariate binary logistic regression models predicting emotional closeness between grandchildren aged approximately three years and their maternal and paternal grandmother and grandfather. It is important to bear in mind that for each grandchild-grandparent dyad analysis, only children with a living grandparent were included, and only if the partner of that grandparent was still alive (the question of grandparents' marital status was only asked if both grandparents were alive). As a result, the analytic subsamples for lineage are the same, although there has been differential attrition of the study sample for maternal and paternal grandparent dyads.

Table 9 Multivariate logistic regression analysis of children aged 3 whose mothers report closeness to each type of grandparent, by parental and grandparental divorce or separation and other individual and socio-structural aspects

	Maternal Grandmother		Maternal Grandfather		Paternal Grandmother		Paternal Grandfather	
	Odds ratios	C.I. [95%]	Odds ratios	C.I. [95%]	Odds ratios	C.I. [95%]	Odds ratios	C.I. [95%]
Sex of the grandchild								
Male (<i>ref.</i>)								
Female	0.991	[0.747,1.315]	1.009	[0.803,1.269]	1.044	[0.787,1.387]	1.125	[0.871,1.453]
Age of mother at birth of child								
30 and over (<i>ref.</i>)								
Under 20	0.705	[0.307,1.619]	1.546	[0.743,3.213]	0.568	[0.222,1.456]	0.383*	[0.155,0.949]
20 to 29	0.959	[0.600,1.534]	0.986	[0.698,1.393]	0.682*	[0.499,0.932]	0.828	[0.627,1.093]
Mother's employment status								
Not working (<i>ref.</i>)								
Full-time	0.619	[0.350,1.094]	0.774	[0.503,1.190]	0.846	[0.538,1.329]	0.996	[0.639,1.553]
Part-time	0.967	[0.672,1.391]	0.955	[0.720,1.268]	0.920	[0.699,1.210]	0.928	[0.714,1.207]
Mother's education								
Degree or equivalent (<i>ref.</i>)								
Vocational below degree	0.727	[0.482,1.096]	0.563**	[0.403,0.788]	0.469***	[0.330,0.667]	0.502***	[0.370,0.681]
Higher grade or equivalent	0.559	[0.281,1.113]	0.625	[0.358,1.090]	1.023	[0.592,1.766]	0.863	[0.514,1.448]
Standard grade or equivalent	0.471**	[0.285,0.776]	0.580*	[0.381,0.883]	0.445**	[0.266,0.746]	0.601*	[0.364,0.992]
No qualification	0.333**	[0.160,0.694]	0.567	[0.305,1.054]	0.316**	[0.134,0.743]	0.427*	[0.212,0.861]
Annual household income								
Bottom Quintile (<£8,410) (<i>ref.</i>)								
2nd Quintile (≥£8,410 < £13,750)	1.892*	[1.082,3.309]	1.439	[0.875,2.366]	0.997	[0.636,1.563]	1.263	[0.746,2.138]
3rd Quintile (≥£13,750 < £21,785)	2.461**	[1.456,4.158]	2.228**	[1.322,3.755]	1.201	[0.672,2.146]	1.561	[0.965,2.526]
4th Quintile (≥£21,785 < £33,571)	2.843***	[1.705,4.740]	1.384	[0.811,2.363]	1.430	[0.877,2.330]	1.539	[0.940,2.518]
Top Quintile (≥£33,571)	4.174***	[2.152,8.096]	1.762	[0.995,3.120]	1.142	[0.631,2.067]	1.394	[0.758,2.564]
Number of siblings in household								
No siblings (<i>ref.</i>)								
One sibling	0.946	[0.621,1.443]	0.808	[0.586,1.113]	0.829	[0.597,1.150]	0.798	[0.589,1.081]
Two or more siblings	0.985	[0.592,1.640]	0.612*	[0.401,0.933]	0.500**	[0.323,0.772]	0.661	[0.436,1.002]
Age of grandparent								
65+ (<i>ref.</i>)								
50 – 64	1.148	[0.795,1.657]	0.771	[0.552,1.075]	1.457*	[1.042,2.036]	1.324	[0.994,1.764]
35 – 49	1.753	[0.895,3.435]	0.770	[0.390,1.518]	1.887	[0.936,3.805]	1.377	[0.654,2.899]

Contact with grandparent								
<i>Everyday or almost (ref:)</i>								
At least once a month	0.197***	[0.115,0.339]	0.328***	[0.224,0.480]	0.224***	[0.102,0.489]	0.275***	[0.149,0.508]
Less than once a month	0.020***	[0.010,0.042]	0.045***	[0.026,0.077]	0.038***	[0.016,0.093]	0.053***	[0.027,0.105]
Never	0.002***	[0.001,0.005]	0.005***	[0.003,0.010]	0.006***	[0.003,0.012]	0.008***	[0.004,0.016]
Proximity with grandparent								
<i>Distant (ref:)</i>								
Proximate	0.902	[0.515,1.579]	0.780	[0.552,1.102]	0.734	[0.507,1.063]	1.319	[0.958,1.815]
Divorced mother								
<i>Not mentioned (ref:)</i>								
Mentioned	1.940*	[1.108,3.398]	1.536	[0.950,2.485]	0.963	[0.409,2.269]	1.301	[0.620,2.732]
Divorced grandparent								
<i>Not mentioned (ref:)</i>								
Mentioned	0.594**	[0.412,0.856]	0.351***	[0.265,0.465]	0.895	[0.636,1.259]	0.467***	[0.329,0.665]
Observations	2,729		2,729		2,181		2,181	

Note: Weighted data. Exponentiated coefficients.

Significance levels: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Maternal grandmother (7.5% missing values out of the analytic sample); maternal grandfather (7.5 % missing values); paternal grandmother (8.8% missing values); paternal grandfather (8.8 % missing values).

Maternal grandmother: Standardized residuals <3: 76 observations; High leverage (3 times mean): 145 observations.

Maternal grandfather: Standardized residuals <3: 78 observations; High leverage (3 times mean): 72 observations.

Paternal grandmother: Standardized residuals <3: 36 observations; High leverage (3 times mean): 56 observations.

Paternal grandfather: Standardized residuals <3: 44 observations; High leverage (3 times mean): 67 observations.

The results reported in table 9 show that parental divorce has a significant association with the mother's perception of emotional closeness for the maternal grandmother dyad only. Relative to grandchildren living with *never* divorced or separated parents, grandchildren of divorced parents have statistically higher odds of being perceived as emotionally close with the maternal grandmother. These grandchildren had almost two times (OR 1.940) higher the odds of being perceived emotionally close to the maternal grandmother compared to grandchildren with parents in an intact couple. This significant association was, however, not found for the maternal grandfather dyad, albeit the odds were also higher (OR 1.536) for grandchildren with divorced or separated parents compared to grandchildren in intact couple households. The results of the multivariate analysis also show that there are no statistically significant differences in the marital or couple status of the grandchild's parents with mothers' perception of emotional closeness of the relationship between the grandchildren and either of their paternal grandparents. However, the odds ratio for the paternal grandmother dyad points to a negative association of this life event in the parental generation and the mother's perception of closeness between the grandchild and that grandparent, albeit the odds of being perceived as emotionally close are higher but not significant for the paternal grandfather dyad. It is important to bear in mind that the lack of a significant association might well be related to the small numbers of divorced parents for the two subsamples of paternal grandparents' dyads. Also, the lack of the expected negative association between parental divorce and the mother of the GUS child perceiving an emotionally distant relationship with the paternal grandparents is partly explained by the inclusion of the controlling variable 'face-to-face contact'. Hence, this intergenerational contact offsets intergenerational emotional distance between grandchildren and grandparents following parental divorce.

The expected 'matrifocal bias' in grandparent-grandchild relationships holds partly true, with grandchildren being more likely to be perceived as emotionally close to grandmothers compared to grandfathers following parental divorce, although this is only the case in the subset for the maternal grandmother dyad. At a first glance, there seems to be a 'matrilineal advantage' of grandparents in the event of parental breakdown. However, this assumption cannot be confirmed with the present analysis. Also, some more refinement of the analysis is needed as the conflict between custodial

parents (i.e. the grandchild's mother in the vast majority of cases) and the non-resident's parents' parents (i.e. the paternal grandparents) following parental divorce was not confirmed by the analysis, with grandchildren having lower odds of being perceived emotionally close with the paternal grandmother and grandfather if the parental generation is divorced or separated. Instead, it seems that once controlling for intergenerational contact between the mother and the grandparent and geographical propinquity of grandparents, as well as by some individual, family and structural aspects of families, the negative effect of parental divorce on the quality of the relationship between grandchildren and paternal grandparents is no longer relevant.

The results for the multivariate models predicting emotional closeness between grandchildren and each of the four grandparent dyads (Table 9) show the negative effects of divorce in the grandparental generation to build a sense of closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents. There is a consistency in the maternal grandchild-grandparent dyads of the effects of grandparental divorce that predicts the existence of emotional closeness between generations. The odd ratios of mothers perceiving emotional closeness between the youngest and oldest generation are strongly statistically significant and lower for grandchildren whose maternal grandparent is divorced compared to those who are still in couple. The analysis for maternal grandmothers show that the odds of a mother reporting emotional closeness of her child with the maternal grandmother is about 40% (OR 0.594) lower if that grandmother is divorced. Similarly, the results show a statistically significant negative association of the lifecourse event of divorce in the grandparental generation on intergenerational emotional closeness with the maternal grandfather. For these grandchildren whose maternal grandfather is divorced the odds of being emotionally close is 65% (OR 0.351) lower than grandchildren with a grandfather in an intact couple. On the other hand, the results of analysis show the absence of a statistically significant association of grandparental divorce of paternal grandmothers with the mother's perception of an emotionally close relationship with her child. By contrast, the odd ratios of mothers perceiving emotional closeness between grandchildren and their paternal grandfather were statistically significant lower for grandchildren whose grandfather was divorced compared to grandchildren with paternal grandfathers in an intact couple. The odds of being perceived emotionally close with the paternal

grandfather is 53% (OR 0.467) lower if that grandfather is divorced. Thus, the existence of a matrifocal or matrilineal advantage that protects grandparents from the negative effects of divorce in building a close intimate relationship with the grandchildren was not found in this analysis.

With regard to the indicators of the structure of family needs and opportunities for interaction between grandchildren and their grandparents, the results of the analysis shown in table 9 indicate that the low frequency of face-to-face (i.e. less frequent than 'less than everyday or almost') or lack of contact between grandchildren and each of the four types of grandparents is a strong predictor of emotional closeness between generations, with the odds of a mother reporting emotional closeness of her child with any of the four types of grandparents being lower if that grandparent had a low or no frequency of face-to-face contact with the grandchild. By contrast, geographical distance between grandchildren and grandparents had no significant effect on the perception of emotional closeness in any of the four grandchild-grandparent dyads.

The results in table 9 show a mixed pattern of associations between greater family needs, characterised by lower material resources and more children in the household, and emotional closeness between grandchildren and the four types of grandparents. In the maternal grandparent-grandchild dyad only is the existence of annual household income that predicts the existence of emotional closeness between generations, with the odds of being perceived as emotionally close to the grandparent among grandchildren to be higher for those grandchildren living in families with a household income above the lowest quintile. The number of siblings in the household show lower odds of mothers reporting emotional closeness between grandchildren and grandparents, albeit this association was not always statistically significant lower. In fact, this was only the case for maternal grandfathers and paternal grandmothers, and only for the 'two or more siblings' category. Thus, the greater economic and childcare needs that often accompanies parental divorce or separation seems to have no strong effect on emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents in any of the four grandchild-grandparent dyads.

Discussion of findings

The main aim of this chapter has been to assess the relationship between parental and grandparental separation or divorce on intergenerational emotional closeness between grandchildren and four types of grandparents, namely maternal and paternal grandmothers and grandfathers. The multivariate models also controlled for a series of socio-demographic and family characteristics of the sample child, as well as relational and structural family life aspects. A second aim of this chapter was to examine the extent to which gender of grandparents explains the mothers' perception of an emotionally close relationship between her child and the grandparents.

Following the 'linked lives' principle of the lifecourse approach and the intergenerational solidarity model, it is suggested that life transitions such as dissolution of the parenting and grandparenting couple in one generation have consequences on the relationships between members of other generations within a family, and greater functional solidarity, which is more likely to occur in divorced or separated families, leads to greater affectual solidarity. Grandchildren-grandparents closer ties following parental divorce or separation has been elsewhere explained by the greater material and emotional needs of these families that often lead to grandparents providing extra aid and support for the custodial parent (Ferguson et al., 2004). The results of the analysis of the effects of parental divorce or separation on intergenerational emotional ties show that the mothers' perception of emotional closeness between the grandchild and the four types of grandparents was only statistically significant higher for the maternal grandchild-grandmother dyad. This finding suggests that greater support from grandparents to younger generations in the family following parental divorce does not immediately translate into a new set of opportunities to enact and sustain close emotional ties. Importantly, the independent effects of face-to-face contact on emotional closeness between the grandchild and each of the four grandparents might help explain the lack of an independent effect of parental divorce on enacting or hindering emotional close ties between generations. This finding suggests that the mothers' perception of emotional closeness of grandchild-grandparent relationships is contingent upon the close contact grandparents have with the grandchild in post-divorced families.

As already mentioned, the odds of being perceived as emotionally close were statistically significant higher among grandchildren and their maternal grandmother in families where the parents were divorced or separated compared to grandchildren with never divorced or separated parents. This finding is aligned with previous research claiming the existence of a matrifocal bias that favours the relation between a child's mother and grandmothers. For instance, Chan and Elder (2000a) suggest that grandparent-grandchild relationships within a family are tilted in favour of the mother-daughter connection, particularly driven by the better quality of bonds and more frequent contact between them compared to fathers and their daughters.

While the 'matrilineal advantage' seems to explain the greater odds of mothers' perception of an emotionally close relationship between children and their maternal grandmothers, the hypothesised negative effects of parental divorce on the emotional relationship between grandchildren and paternal grandparents were not found. This is somewhat unexpected as the literature points to a negative effect of parental divorce on the paternal grandparents given their delicate position in the family (Dench and Ogg, 2002). Marital or couple breakdown often leads to a renegotiation of the family obligations and responsibilities motivated by the changing circumstances associated with the available material and non-material resources and family living situations, with grandparents often more likely to face dilemmas on the appropriate way to relate to grandchildren and their parents (Timonen and Arber, 2012, Douglas and Ferguson, 2003). Emotional strains might surge between generations in the family following dissolution of the parenting couple, preventing grandparents from seeing grandchildren or severing relations with their own child or the child's partner. However, it seems that, after controlling for the effects of the frequency of face-to-face contact between the grandchild and the grandparent in the models, the negative effects of parental divorce on the mother's perception of closeness between the grandchild and their paternal grandparents were no longer significant. These results are in line with previous research asserting the importance of contact between parents and grandparents in mediating the negative effects of divorce on family relationships (Timonen and Doyle, 2012). This finding suggests more complex intergenerational dynamic family relationships than the 'matrilineal advantage' theory. Family relationships are shaped by the importance of the involvement of grandparents in the

life of their grandchildren and the *agency* of grandparents to sustain contact with the grandchild of divorced parents rather than biological ties of mother-daughter relationships. This rings true particularly for the paternal grandparent dyads. Paternal grandparents who manage to retain links with the custodial parent or negotiate ambivalent situations arising from parental divorce or separation can offset negative effects coming from the loss of contact of the non-resident father with the child or the conflict between parents.

The results of the effect of grandparental divorce on emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents point to strains or tensions in the intergenerational relationships between the oldest the middle generation, even after controlling for intergenerational face-to-face contact between grandchildren and their grandparents. Interestingly, the ‘matrifocal’ and matrilineal advantage (Chan and Elder 2000) theory glosses over complex intergenerational dynamics. The results show that grandchildren had lower odds to be perceived by the mother of the child as emotionally close to the maternal grandmother if she was divorced compared to grandchildren with never divorced grandmothers. This negative association was also found in the maternal and paternal grandfather dyads, but it was not statistically significant for the paternal grandmother dyad. The findings of the analysis suggest that divorce in the grandparental generation influence the opportunities of grandparents in developing emotional close ties with their grandchildren and foreground the need of analytically considering lifecourse events such as divorce in more than one generation within a family. This is particularly important as strains in the oldest generation that might follow divorce has significant reverberations in the wider family relationships and kinship network that enhance or preclude close emotional ties between grandchildren and grandparents.

The results in this chapter partly support the intergenerational ambivalence model and the ‘linked lives’ principle. These conceptualisations point to the importance of the interconnectedness of various generations across the family to form emotionally close relationships, which might help offset situations of conflict and tensions arising from life events such as parental and grandparental breakdown. The results in this chapter also point to the significance of gender and intergenerational dynamics in

understanding variations in grandchild-grandparent emotional close ties. Although the results were inconclusive, gender and intergenerational dynamics cannot be ignored when studying grandchild-grandparent patterns of emotional relationships and future studies should take into account these social structural and relational aspects for the analysis of emotional close ties between grandchildren and grandparents. Also, the results in this chapter foreground the limitations of the intergenerational solidarity model that obviates the structuring relations of gender in its material, emotional and practical consequences.

In summary, the assumption of a double advantage or disadvantage of marital breakdown in the middle and oldest generation enabling an emotional close relationship between grandchildren and their grandparents finds no support in the analysis of the four grandchild-grandparent dyads. The hypothesised positive effects of parental divorce on emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents by gender and lineage was only found for the maternal grandmother dyad, which partly assert a ‘matrifocal’ and matrilineal advantage in family ties following parental divorce. However, the expected offsetting effects of a closer grandmother-daughter relationship was not found for divorced grandmothers. The kin-keeper functions associated with the female role and closer daughter-mother ties find little support in the analysis. Also, the expected negative effects of parental divorce on emotional closeness between grandchildren and their paternal grandparents were not found. The ‘matrilineal advantage’ theory glosses over the agency of grandparents and de-emphasises the importance of intergenerational relationship dynamics in shaping close emotional bonds across generations in families. Importantly, the findings in this chapter point to the importance of relationality in analysing intergenerational relationships and feelings of emotional closeness between generations.

Chapter Seven

Grandparental involvement and emotional closeness

Introduction

The previous chapter examined the relationship between either or both parental and grandparental marital or couple breakdown and emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents. This life course event was examined in combination with a series of indicators of the structure of family needs and opportunities for interaction between generations within a family, and how they influence the grandchildren's mothers' sense of a close relationship between grandchildren and their grandparents. The results showed a matrilineal advantage in the effects of parental divorce in shaping the mothers' perception of emotional closeness between the child and maternal grandparents, and the absence of a positive or negative effect in the quality of the relationship with paternal grandparents when controlling for individual and family circumstances. In addition, grandparental divorce was positively associated with the perception of emotional closeness of grandchild-grandparent relationships only if the mother and grandparent were in contact.

This chapter follows the analytical path of the previous two quantitative chapters and examines the extent to which grandparents' direct involvement in the life of grandchildren explains mothers' perception of emotional closeness between grandchildren and grandparents. In brief, I explore the relationship between the frequency by which grandparents look after, babysit, have the grandchild staying overnight and go on outings with the grandchild and emotional closeness between grandchildren and their maternal and paternal grandmother and grandfather. Before describing the results of the bivariate and multivariate analysis, I briefly review the relevant literature on the topic (a full review can be found in chapter 1) and signal the theoretical framework used to interpret the results of the analysis. The discussion of the findings closes the chapter.

Literature review

Much research on grandparenthood has focused on the factors that motivate or shape the heterogeneous investment of grandparents in family life in the form of transfers of time and resources to grandchildren, as well as material or emotional help to the middle generation (see a comprehensive review in chapter 1). However, there are few studies that have examined to what extent shared activities of daily living between grandparents and grandchildren contribute to enacting emotional ties between these two generations. The literature suggests that grandparents and grandchildren engage in a large variety of activities together; grandchildren engaging in a larger number of shared activities with their grandparents, and engaging in these activities more frequently, has been found to have stronger ties with their grandparents (Eisenberg, 1988, Kennedy, 1992a). Some research found that there are differences by the age and gender of the grandparent in the type and extent of shared activities with grandchildren. Silverstein and Marengo (2001) found that younger grandparents shared more activities and interacted more with their grandchildren. But grandmothers are more likely to provide childcare activities, whereas grandfathers are typically engaged in instrumental ones (Kennedy, 1992a). However, a recent qualitative study suggested that contemporary grandfathers actively construct caring practices in different spaces and time that challenge 'ageing masculinities' embedded in a gendered division of labour in family care (Tarrant, 2013). Nevertheless, the study found that some grandfathers' performances reproduce traditional gendered divisions of care. This suggests some added complexities in the ways grandfathers provide, organise and perform practices of care for their grandchildren that intersect gender relations.

The variability of grandparents in the nature and extent to which they share activities with their grandchildren is likely to be linked with the structure of opportunities grandparents have to access and be involved in the life of their grandchildren. As some research has noted, the extent to which grandparents engage in these activities depend on structural aspects such as geographical proximity of living, contact between grandparents and their grandchildren and the quality of the bond between the parent and the grandparent (Silverstein and Marengo, 2001, King, 2003). Importantly, some research demonstrates that grandparents' divorce mediates in the number of activities

that grandparents, particularly grandfathers, share together with their grandchildren (King, 2003). However, there is limited research examining the effects of shared activities of daily living between grandparents and grandchildren on enacting a sense of emotional closeness between these two generations in the early years of grandchildren in a three-generational perspective.

Theoretical framework

Little of the family research literature on shared activities between grandparents and grandchildren has been guided by a theoretical framework. Although, descriptive accounts can be informative, they seldom advance understanding of how individuals in a family enact and sustain a sense of emotional closeness through activities and practices of everyday life. As yet there no comprehensive conceptualisation of grandparenthood has been established, so in this chapter I draw on key concepts and ideas from intergenerational relationships frameworks and the life course approach, in order to develop an understanding of the relationship of activities of daily living and grandparental emotional closeness.

The intergenerational solidarity model (Bengtson and Roberts, 1991) conceptualises *intergenerational solidarity* as a multidimensional construct of which the emotional bonds between family members are part of the affectual solidarity in intergenerational relationships. These different dimensions are mutually influenced by each other either facilitating or strengthening the bonds in one or more dimensions. In line with the principles of this model, the strength of the affective bonds between grandchildren and grandparents is subject to other dimensions of solidarity such as associational, structural and functional solidarity. It is proposed that the salience of the emotional connection between grandchildren and grandparents will be more likely if grandparents and grandchildren interact more often (associational solidarity), are geographically close (structural solidarity) and provide more help and exchange resources more often (functional solidarity). Some scholars have argued that the increase in intergenerational solidarity between generations is proof of the strategic adaptations of families to face social and economic changes in the family (Bengtson et al., 2002). In line with the intergenerational solidarity model, grandparents'

solidarity behaviours to other generations would be more salient in families with greater childcare and material family needs. Alternatively, solidarity behaviours are precluded in the event of *conflict* between generations. Family relationships can be strained by life events such as divorce or separation, which would lead to a lack of intergenerational solidarity.

However, the intergenerational solidarity model stresses the influence between family members in adjacent generations, and ignores the effect of other relationships in the family network that are also likely to influence solidarity behaviours. This contrasts with the *linked lives* principle in Elder's (1998) life course approach that views family members' actions as part of one's own circumstances and those of others in the family. Also, family members' opportunities to be part of each other's' life are mutually interdependent with these of other members, and linked to their individual needs at different moments of their life. As such, emotional ties between grandchildren and their grandparents are influenced or regulated by the middle generation.

However, more frequent involvement of grandparents in the life of their grandchildren, either providing help or sharing activities, may not automatically lead to greater affectual solidarity as expected in the intergenerational solidarity model. The normative underpinnings of intergenerational solidarity behaviours have been claimed to present an often too rigid picture of families, and the dynamics of the relationships between family members (Connidis and McMullin, 2002). Instead, the concept of *ambivalence* in intergenerational relationships highlights the multiple situations in which mutually contradicting situations occur in families. By investing more time and resources on grandchildren, grandparents might feel a loss in their autonomy to draw boundaries in the extent to which they want to participate in family life (Timonen and Doyle, 2012). The strength in the functional solidarity might lead to a situation of negative sentiments or tensions that might affect the emotional closeness between grandchildren and grandparents. Also, parental and grandparental divorce can lead to ambivalent situations. While strains and conflict in the middle and old generation might follow parental or grandparental divorce, this situation does not automatically or necessarily decrease the opportunities of grandparents to access to their grandchildren.

As discussed in chapter 5 and 6, the heterogeneity of intergenerational relationships has also been argued to respond to differences in gender and generational relations. While the centrality of women as kin-keepers (Dubas, 2001) signals that grandmothers are more invested in family life than grandfathers, the matrilineal advantage emphasises that what matters is the ways parents do the kin-keeping role, that is, the differences in the way mothers and grandmothers engage in social support and the closer relations that they maintain with each other. This is critically examined as some scholars claim that grandfathers play a significant and central role in the lives of their grandchildren, and extract emotional rewards from this involvement, while at the same time maintaining gendered attitudes towards caring (Mann and Leeson, 2010). The involvement of grandfathers in the life of their grandchildren such as in the form of caring practices is not expected (Spitze and Ward, 1998), the participation in such caring and other activities with grandchildren might be distinctly perceived by mothers as significantly more relevant than that of grandmothers. The analysis conducted in this chapter examines the extent to which different activities of daily life influence the perception of an emotionally close relationship between grandchildren and their maternal and paternal grandmothers and grandfathers.

Research Question

This chapter examines the extent to which the frequency of a series of activities of the daily life shared between grandchildren and their grandparents contribute to a sense of emotional closeness between grandchildren and grandparents. It will specifically look at whether there are differences in the ways these practices are enacted between maternal grandmothers and grandfathers. In addition, it will also examine whether these activities have the same effect when controlling for parental and grandparental divorce or separation. The analysis aims to address the following research question:

RQ3: Is there an association between the nature and frequency of practices of everyday life, of grandchildren with their grandparents, and emotional closeness between grandchildren and their maternal and paternal grandmothers and grandfathers? Is there a change in the estimated strength of the association of

emotional closeness with activities of daily living when controlling for parental and grandparental divorce?

It is hypothesised that a more frequent involvement of grandparents in the life of the grandchild through activities of daily living would lead to a greater likelihood of mothers perceiving a sense of emotional closeness between grandchildren and grandparents. But that this effect is intersected by gender and lineage that might diminish or enhance the patterns of intergenerational emotionalities. It is expected that grandfathers will be more likely to be perceived as close if they engage more frequently in any of the activities of caring and sharing and spending time with than grandmothers.

The second part of the question examines the strength of association between the nature and frequency of practices of everyday life, of grandchildren and their grandparents, and a mother's perception of emotional closeness when controlling for parental and grandparental divorce. Because the breakdown of the relationship between the parents of the child typically prompts readjustments in the social and economic life of children and parents (Douglas and Ferguson, 2003), it is expected that divorce or separation in the parental and/or grandparental generation influences the extent to which practices of everyday life are enacted which would be hypothesised to affect the possibilities to generate emotional closeness between grandchildren and grandparents. Similarly, grandparents' divorce or separation has consequences in the relation with the middle generation (Timonen and Doyle, 2012) which can then jeopardise and decrease the opportunities for grandparents to interact and engage in activities of daily living with their grandchildren, and hinder the possibilities to enact a sense of closeness with them. It is assumed that children of divorced families have greater needs for support and aid, which will influence the extent to which grandparents are involved in various activities of daily living. This altogether will lead to a greater likelihood of an emotionally close relationship between generations. Yet, it is expected that there are differences within and between families in the extent to which this life transition enhances a close relationship. For instance, following parental divorce or separation maternal grandparents might be called upon to fill in as a result of economic and emotional strains leading to greater opportunities to enact an

emotionally close relationship. Paternal grandparents, on the other hand, might experience a reduction in the opportunities to engage with grandchildren in various activities of daily living following the divorce of the son and, as a result, experience fewer chances to enact a close relationship.

Binary Logistic Regression

A series of indicators have been chosen to capture the interaction between the child in the GUS study aged three at the time of the interview (2005/2006) and four types of grandparents, namely maternal and paternal grandmothers and grandfathers. Three variables have been included to capture aspects of the associational and functional dimensions of intergenerational solidarity that predict emotional closeness between grandchildren and grandparents. These variables are the frequency that the grandparent ‘looks after the grandchild’ (*LOOK***), ‘babysits the grandchild’ (*BST***) and ‘goes on outings’ with the grandchild (*OUT***). In addition, other independent variables were controlled in the various models. This is in line with the analytical approach adopted in the models in chapter 5 and 6. The only difference with the previous models is the exclusion of the variable ‘face-to-face contact’ between grandchildren and grandparents. This decision responds to the fact that there would be a perfect collinearity between those grandchildren whose mother and grandparent have *never* face-to-face contact and the category *never* in each of the variables ‘frequency of activities shared between the grandchild and the grandparent’.

The analysis of the effects of the frequency of shared activities on emotional closeness between grandchildren and grandparents was by mean of binary logistic regression (see page 122 for more details). The four multivariate regression models are not directly comparable since each of the subsamples for the grandchild-grandparent dyad may contain different subsets of children. The two models are not directly comparable either since the analytic sample of children with divorced grandparents only includes cases in which both grandparents are alive. The main objective here is to examine the extent of the effects of a series of variables capturing interactions between grandchildren and grandparents and the association with emotional closeness between grandchildren and grandparents. More details of the multivariate binary logistic

regression can be found in the methodology chapter (chapter 4). Also, the equations for each of the grandchild-grandparent dyads for the two models in this chapter can be found in Appendix G, and are based on cross-sectional data using the third sweep of the Birth Cohort 1 of the GUS survey.

Findings

Table 10 shows the frequency distribution of the frequency of various activities of daily life between the children in the GUS study aged three years, and each of the four types of grandparents included in this analysis. *Casewise* deletion has been used in each of the four subsamples of grandchild-grandparent relationships. The percentage of observations deleted using the aforementioned method is 6.6% for the maternal grandmother dyad, 7.3% in the maternal grandfather dyad, 7.8% in the paternal grandmother and 8.7% in the paternal grandfather dyad. In summary, table 9 shows there are more children who are looked after, babysat or went on outings with a grandparent than children who *never* do so, albeit this is not the case for the two paternal grandparent dyads in the activity of going on outings together. The distribution of children by frequency of being looked after is relatively similar in each of the four grandchild-grandparent dyads, albeit there are some differences. For instance, 48.9% of children in the subsample of maternal grandmothers had frequent contact, that is at least once a month or more often up to everyday or almost, while 41.1% of children were in such high intense contact with the maternal grandfather, 40% with the paternal grandmother and 39.2% with the paternal grandfather. Alternatively, a bit over a fifth (20.7%) of children was *never* looked after the maternal grandmother, almost a third (31.9%) in the maternal grandfather dyad, more than 40% (42.6%) were never looked after by the paternal grandmother and similarly (44.7%) by the paternal grandfather.

Table Table 10 Univariate descriptive statistics of frequency of activities of daily living between the grandchild and their grandparents at age 3 of the grandchild by type of grandparent, Birth Cohort 1 (%)

Variable name and categories	Maternal grandmother ¹ (N= 3,445)	Maternal grandfather ¹ (N= 2,734)	Paternal grandmother ¹ (N= 2,841)	Paternal grandfather ¹ (N= 2,212)
Looking after the grandchild				
Frequently	48.9	41.1	40.0	39.2
Rarely	30.3	27.0	17.3	16.1
Never	20.7	31.9	42.6	44.7
Babysitting the grandchild				
Frequently	13.1	10.4	20.2	19.4
Rarely	56.8	50.1	29.9	28.6
Never	30.1	39.4	49.9	52.0
Going on outings together				
Frequently	16.9	14.2	21.0	20.8
Rarely	48.4	44.2	21.8	22.3
Never	34.7	41.6	57.2	56.9

Note: Pearson chi-square reported are Designed-based.

Note: Data weighted for complex survey design. Scaled method to deal with singleton stratum.

Note: Maternal grandmother (6.6% observations dropped); Maternal grandfather (7.3% observations dropped); Paternal grandmother (7.8 % observations dropped); Paternal grandfather (8.7 % observations dropped).

1: Only if the grandparent and her/his partner are alive.

With regards to the frequency of being babysat by the grandparent, table 10 shows that in any of the four subsamples grandchildren were ‘rarely’ or ‘never’ looked after by any of the four types of grandparents, although the percentage distribution is substantially different. For example, 13.1% of children were babysat ‘frequently’ by the maternal grandmother, and only 10.7% of children were than often babysat by the maternal grandfather. Nonetheless, a fifth (20.2%) of children were frequently babysat by the paternal grandmother, and almost the same percentage (19.7%) by the paternal grandfather. Alternatively, less than a third (30.1%) of children were ‘never’ babysat in the maternal grandmother dyad, 39.4% in the subsample of maternal grandfather, although half of children (49.9%) were ‘never’ babysat by the paternal grandmother, and 52.0% in the paternal grandfather dyad.

Finally, the percentage distribution of children that go on outing with each of the four types of grandparents show also some interesting differences. While the majority of children in the maternal grandparent dyads had gone frequently or rarely on outings together with the grandparent, the vast majority of children in the paternal grandparent

dyads had ‘never’ done so. Only 16.9% of children had been frequently going on outings with the maternal grandmother, but as much as 48.4% of them had done so on a rarely basis (i.e. less often than once a month), whereas these percentages were slightly lower in the maternal grandfather dyad, 14.2% and 44.2% respectively. The frequency distribution in the paternal grandparent dyads show more children going on outings on a ‘frequent’ basis, more than a fifth in the paternal grandmother (21%) and paternal grandfather (20.8%) dyads, although a similar percentage of children were going on outings on a rarely basis with the paternal grandmother (21.8%) and the paternal grandfather (22.3%).

Alternatively, just a bit over a third (34.7%) had never gone on outings with the maternal grandmother, 41.5% of the children in the subsample of maternal grandfathers had never been on outings, 57.2% in the paternal grandmothers and 56.9% in the grandchild-paternal grandfather dyad.

Results of the multivariate analysis

Turning to the multivariate binary logistic regression models predicting emotional closeness between grandchildren aged approximately three years and their grandparents (Tables 11 and 12), it is important to remind that each grandchild-grandparent dyad includes different observations, and that the two models are not directly comparable since they include different observations.

Nevertheless, the results in table 11 and 12 show that consistently across each of the four grandchild-grandparent dyads, the grandparent has higher odds of emotionally closeness if the grandchild is looked after more often than ‘never’; the odds are increasingly higher as the frequency of being looked after by the grandparent is more often. The other two variables of frequency of activities of daily life, babysitting and going on outings, between grandchildren and grandparents were also found to shape the development of an emotionally close relationship with the grandchild and each of the four types of grandparents. In summary, the results show that the frequency of babysitting the grandchild is only a strong predictor of emotional closeness between grandparents and grandchildren for some grandchild-grandparent dyads but not others.

Table 11 Multivariate logistic regression analysis of children aged 3 whose mothers report closeness to each type of grandparent, by frequency of activities of daily living and other individual and socio-structural aspects

	Maternal Grandmother		Maternal Grandfather		Paternal Grandmother		Paternal Grandfather	
	Odds ratios	C.I. [95%]	Odds ratios	C.I. [95%]	Odds ratios	C.I. [95%]	Odds ratios	C.I. [95%]
Sex of the grandchild								
Male (<i>ref.</i>)								
Female	1.110	[0.851,1.448]	1.213	[0.971,1.515]	0.969	[0.779,1.206]	1.118	[0.883,1.416]
Age of mother at birth of child								
30 and over (<i>ref.</i>)								
Under 20	0.676	[0.306,1.492]	0.919	[0.488,1.730]	0.792	[0.394,1.593]	0.305***	[0.153,0.605]
20 to 29	0.944	[0.664,1.342]	0.901	[0.664,1.224]	0.605***	[0.463,0.791]	0.745*	[0.578,0.959]
Mother's employment status								
Not working (<i>ref.</i>)								
Full-time	0.574*	[0.341,0.967]	0.659*	[0.439,0.990]	0.839	[0.573,1.228]	0.849	[0.557,1.294]
Part-time	0.742*	[0.567,0.970]	0.827	[0.625,1.094]	0.792	[0.620,1.013]	0.768*	[0.591,0.997]
Mother's education								
Degree or equivalent (<i>ref.</i>)								
Vocational below degree	0.838	[0.597,1.177]	0.671*	[0.477,0.946]	0.542***	[0.406,0.723]	0.512***	[0.391,0.670]
Higher grade or equivalent	0.673	[0.405,1.117]	0.760	[0.450,1.282]	0.958	[0.600,1.529]	0.988	[0.568,1.717]
Standard grade or equivalent	0.800	[0.493,1.300]	0.827	[0.545,1.254]	0.580*	[0.378,0.890]	0.721	[0.459,1.133]
No qualification	0.547*	[0.313,0.955]	0.690	[0.404,1.178]	0.563*	[0.325,0.976]	0.556	[0.297,1.041]
Annual household income								
Bottom Quintile (<£8,410) (<i>ref.</i>)								
2nd Quintile (≥£8,410 < £13,750)	1.375	[0.909,2.079]	1.168	[0.801,1.703]	1.459	[0.988,2.157]	1.282	[0.764,2.150]
3rd Quintile (≥£13,750 < £21,785)	1.562	[0.975,2.501]	1.864**	[1.168,2.973]	1.329	[0.884,1.999]	1.308	[0.798,2.144]
4th Quintile (≥£21,785 < £33,571)	1.586*	[1.009,2.494]	0.976	[0.650,1.464]	1.407	[0.942,2.101]	1.250	[0.744,2.101]
Top Quintile (≥£33,571)	2.361**	[1.369,4.071]	1.363	[0.873,2.128]	1.257	[0.779,2.029]	1.291	[0.712,2.341]
Number of siblings in household								
No siblings (<i>ref.</i>)								
One sibling	0.776	[0.539,1.117]	0.820	[0.592,1.135]	0.952	[0.736,1.231]	0.822	[0.611,1.105]
Two or more siblings	0.759	[0.519,1.108]	0.693*	[0.487,0.986]	0.637**	[0.466,0.871]	0.683*	[0.469,0.995]
Age of grandparent								
65+ (<i>ref.</i>)								
50 – 64	0.759	[0.561,1.027]	0.616**	[0.451,0.841]	1.045	[0.829,1.316]	0.956	[0.775,1.181]
35 – 49	0.719	[0.414,1.249]	0.484**	[0.283,0.831]	0.919	[0.549,1.539]	0.656	[0.372,1.156]
Proximity with grandparent								
Distant (<i>ref.</i>)								

Proximate	2.606***	[1.877,3.617]	2.150***	[1.645,2.810]	2.565***	[2.022,3.254]	2.081***	[1.617,2.677]
Looking after the grandchild								
Never (<i>ref.</i>)								
Frequently	17.87***	[9.694,32.93]	6.197***	[4.270,8.993]	6.727***	[4.122,10.98]	7.306***	[4.775,11.18]
Rarely	3.214***	[2.311,4.469]	3.916***	[2.722,5.634]	2.171***	[1.454,3.242]	2.807***	[1.938,4.068]
Babysitting the grandchild								
Never (<i>ref.</i>)								
Frequently	1.808	[0.581,5.624]	1.773	[0.921,3.415]	2.409**	[1.370,4.235]	2.428**	[1.340,4.400]
Rarely	2.866***	[1.969,4.171]	2.132***	[1.595,2.851]	1.972***	[1.456,2.671]	1.440*	[1.003,2.068]
Going on outings together								
Never (<i>ref.</i>)								
Frequently	2.641*	[1.043,6.685]	4.071***	[1.937,8.556]	3.102***	[1.904,5.055]	3.327***	[1.976,5.600]
Rarely	2.758***	[1.956,3.887]	3.459***	[2.468,4.848]	2.116***	[1.482,3.022]	2.946***	[2.018,4.302]
Observations	3,445		2,734		2,841		2,181	

Note: Weighted data. Exponentiated coefficients.

Significance levels: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Maternal grandmother: Standardized residuals <3: 59 observations; High leverage: 251 observations

Maternal grandfather: Standardized residuals <3: 78 observations; High leverage: 94 observations

Paternal grandmother: Standardized residuals <3: 45 observations; High leverage: 109 observations

Paternal grandfather: Standardized residuals <3: 53 observations; High leverage: 56 observations

Table 12 Multivariate logistic regression analysis of children aged 3 whose mothers report closeness to each type of grandparent, by activities of daily living, parental and grandparental divorce or separation and other socio-structural aspects

	Maternal Grandmother		Maternal Grandfather		Paternal Grandmother		Paternal Grandfather	
	Odds ratios	C.I. [95%]	Odds ratios	C.I. [95%]	Odds ratios	C.I. [95%]	Odds ratios	C.I. [95%]
Sex of the grandchild								
Male (<i>ref.</i>)								
Female	1.085	[0.798,1.474]	1.193	[0.946,1.505]	1.105	[0.854,1.430]	1.127	[0.888,1.430]
Age of mother at birth of child								
30 and over (<i>ref.</i>)								
Under 20	0.505	[0.211,1.210]	1.000	[0.516,1.941]	0.604	[0.263,1.390]	0.317**	[0.155,0.646]
20 to 29	0.968	[0.629,1.489]	0.937	[0.695,1.263]	0.651*	[0.468,0.906]	0.768*	[0.590,0.999]
Mother's employment status								
Not working (<i>ref.</i>)								
Full-time	0.516*	[0.285,0.936]	0.673	[0.444,1.022]	0.712	[0.466,1.089]	0.879	[0.576,1.341]
Part-time	0.834	[0.590,1.178]	0.901	[0.670,1.212]	0.762*	[0.588,0.986]	0.786	[0.604,1.022]
Mother's education								
Degree or equivalent (<i>ref.</i>)								
Vocational below degree	0.856	[0.577,1.269]	0.694*	[0.497,0.968]	0.518***	[0.367,0.729]	0.520***	[0.394,0.685]
Higher grade or equivalent	0.602	[0.338,1.073]	0.806	[0.478,1.360]	1.139	[0.645,2.011]	0.959	[0.552,1.663]
Standard grade or equivalent	0.825	[0.485,1.404]	0.860	[0.571,1.294]	0.588*	[0.353,0.978]	0.712	[0.447,1.133]
No qualification	0.503*	[0.264,0.957]	0.747	[0.439,1.272]	0.362**	[0.183,0.719]	0.557	[0.295,1.054]
Annual household income								
Bottom Quintile (<£8,410) (<i>ref.</i>)								
2nd Quintile (>=£8,410< £13,750)	1.669*	[1.002,2.783]	1.445	[0.921,2.267]	1.029	[0.671,1.580]	1.229	[0.721,2.096]
3rd Quintile (>=£13,750< £21,785)	1.883*	[1.096,3.233]	2.447***	[1.497,4.002]	0.971	[0.574,1.643]	1.292	[0.765,2.182]
4th Quintile (>=£21,785< £33,571)	2.108**	[1.247,3.564]	1.245	[0.771,2.011]	1.099	[0.678,1.781]	1.187	[0.698,2.017]
Top Quintile (>=£33,571)	3.410***	[1.807,6.436]	1.859*	[1.139,3.034]	0.995	[0.577,1.716]	1.207	[0.644,2.262]
Number of siblings in household								
No siblings (<i>ref.</i>)								
One sibling	0.958	[0.630,1.457]	0.866	[0.625,1.199]	0.782	[0.564,1.085]	0.805	[0.597,1.087]
Two or more siblings	1.008	[0.624,1.629]	0.782	[0.532,1.149]	0.502**	[0.336,0.750]	0.664*	[0.449,0.982]
Age of grandparent								
65+ (<i>ref.</i>)								

50 – 64	0.931	[0.637,1.361]	0.692*	[0.496,0.965]	1.148	[0.860,1.531]	1.046	[0.831,1.317]
35 – 49	1.104	[0.529,2.304]	0.580	[0.313,1.075]	1.105	[0.600,2.037]	0.791	[0.428,1.460]
Proximity with grandparent (<i>ref: Distant</i>)								
Proximate	2.264***	[1.546,3.316]	2.157***	[1.653,2.815]	2.233***	[1.655,3.013]	2.070***	[1.604,2.671]
Looking after the grandchild (<i>ref: Never</i>)								
Frequently	19.46***	[9.224,41.06]	4.825***	[3.316,7.019]	7.974***	[4.926,12.91]	6.362***	[4.093,9.887]
Rarely	2.958***	[2.046,4.278]	3.381***	[2.331,4.904]	2.346***	[1.520,3.620]	2.511***	[1.718,3.672]
Babysitting the grandchild (<i>ref: Never</i>)								
Frequently	2.273	[0.610,8.471]	1.497	[0.766,2.928]	2.311*	[1.228,4.348]	2.242**	[1.246,4.033]
Rarely	2.455***	[1.629,3.698]	1.852***	[1.364,2.515]	1.907***	[1.409,2.581]	1.322	[0.923,1.893]
Going on outings together (<i>ref: Never</i>)								
Frequently	3.319	[0.909,12.12]	3.805***	[1.797,8.060]	3.833***	[2.043,7.190]	3.269***	[1.940,5.507]
Rarely	2.948***	[2.126,4.087]	3.159***	[2.209,4.517]	2.550***	[1.686,3.858]	2.816***	[1.923,4.125]
Divorced mother (<i>ref: Not mentioned</i>)								
Mentioned	2.044**	[1.208,3.457]	1.699*	[1.111,2.598]	0.566	[0.292,1.095]	0.714	[0.372,1.372]
Divorced grandparent (<i>ref: Not mentioned</i>)								
Mentioned	0.604**	[0.418,0.873]	0.463***	[0.338,0.635]	1.184	[0.876,1.601]	0.595***	[0.448,0.790]
Observations	2,751		2,751		2,181		2,181	

Note: Weighted data. Exponentiated coefficients.

Significance levels: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$

Maternal grandmother: Standardized residuals <3: 50 observations; High leverage: 223 observations

Maternal grandfather: Standardized residuals <3: 75 observations; High leverage: 73 observations

Paternal grandmother: Standardized residuals <3: 39 observations; High leverage: 75 observations

Paternal grandfather: Standardized residuals <3: 46 observations; High leverage: 66 observations

Finally, the association of the activity ‘frequency of going on outings’ with emotional closeness was found significant for all the grandchild-grandparent dyads.

Frequency of looking after. The results in table 11 show the strong effect of the high intensity of looking after the grandchild (i.e. more often than ‘never’) in each of the four grandchild-grandparent dyads on developing an emotionally close relationship between them. In each of the four grandchild-grandparent dyads the odds of mothers perceiving an emotionally close relationship between that grandparent and her child increases ordinally according to the extent

that frequency of looking after the grandchild by the grandparent is more often than ‘never’, very substantially significant higher among grandchildren who were looked after ‘frequently’ the increase was 18 times (OR 17.87), 6 (OR 6.197), almost 7 (OR 6.727) and over 7 (OR 7.306) for maternal grandmothers, maternal grandfathers, paternal grandmothers and paternal grandfathers respectively. The odds were also statistically significant higher among grandchildren who are looked after by their grandparents ‘rarely’ (i.e. less often than once a month), roughly between 3 (OR 2.958) times more, almost 4 (OR 3.916), double (OR 2.171) and almost 3 (OR 2.807) depending on the dyad.

Although the results cannot be compared, table 12 shows that after controlling for parental and grandparental divorce or separation the odds were also statistically significant higher among grandchildren who were looked after more often than ‘never’ by any of the grandparents, with roughly 19 times (OR 19.46) the odds of having an emotionally close relationship among those who were ‘frequently’ looked after by the maternal grandmother, although this increase was only almost 5 (OR 4.825) times the odds with the maternal grandfather dyad relative to grandchildren who were ‘never’ looked after. The odds of emotional closeness were also higher for paternal grandmother with roughly 8 times (OR 7.974) higher among grandchildren looked after ‘frequently’ and 6 (OR 6.362) if it was the paternal grandfather.

Frequency of babysitting. The results in table 11 show that the frequency of the activity babysitting is only strong for the grandchild-paternal grandmother dyad and relatively strong for the grandchild-paternal grandfather dyad in predicting the existence of emotional closeness between generations. The odd ratios of mothers perceiving

emotional closeness between the youngest and oldest generation are, nonetheless, only statistically significant higher among grandchildren who were babysat by the maternal grandmother ‘rarely’ compared to those who were ‘never’ babysat. These results were also found for the grandchild-maternal grandfather dyad. In the paternal grandparent dyads, the odd ratios of mothers perceiving an emotionally close relationship between her child and a grandparent was statistically significant higher among those children who were babysat ‘frequently’ relative to children who were ‘never’ babysat roughly two-and-a-half (OR 2.409) with the paternal grandmother and more than double (OR 2.428) with the paternal grandfather. The odds were also statistically significant higher among grandchildren who were babysat by their grandparents ‘rarely’, roughly three to one-and-a-half depending on the dyad.

Table 12 shows the results of the effects of babysitting on emotional closeness controlling for parental and grandparental divorce. As can be seen in table 12, the frequency of babysitting the grandchild by the grandparent is only strongly associated with emotional closeness on the grandchild-paternal grandparent dyads. In the grandchild-paternal grandmother dyad the increase was of more than double (OR 2.311) the odds of having an emotionally close relationship among those who were babysat ‘frequently’ by that grandparent relative to children who were ‘never’ babysat, and these odds were also more than double (OR 2.242) if the grandchild had ‘frequently’ been babysat by the paternal grandfather, albeit there is no statistically significant higher odds for the category ‘rarely’ in the grandchild-paternal grandfather dyad. Alternatively, the grandchild-maternal grandparent dyads statistically significant higher odds are only found in the category ‘rarely’ relative to children who were ‘never’ babysat, with 2.5 (OR 2.455) times the odds of grandchildren being perceived as close with the maternal grandmother and 1.8 (OR 1.852) with the maternal grandfather.

Frequency of outings. The multivariate analysis (table 11) shows that the more frequent engagement in outing between the grandchildren and their grandparents was associated with more emotional closeness for all the four grandchild-grandparent dyads except for the category ‘frequently’ relative to ‘never’ in the grandchild-maternal grandmother dyad. In each of the four grandchild-grandparent dyads the odds of mothers perceiving an emotionally close relationship between that grandparent and

her child increases ordinally according to the extent that frequency of going on outings between that grandparent and the grandchild is more often than 'never'. The odds were statistically significant higher among grandchildren who went on outing with the grandparent 'frequently' relative to grandchildren who 'never' went on outings with the grandparent, with basically four (OR 4.071) times the odds of having an emotionally close relationship with the maternal grandfather, a bit over three (OR 3.102) with the paternal grandmother and also slightly over three (OR 3.327) with the paternal grandfather. The odd ratios were also statistically significant higher among grandchildren who went on outings with their grandparent on a 'rarely' basis (i.e. less often than once a month), the increase was almost 3 (OR 2.948) times the odds of having an emotionally close relationship with the maternal grandmother, more than three times (OR 3.459) with the maternal grandfather, more than double (OR 2.116) and almost three times (OR 2.946) with the paternal grandfather.

The results in table 12 show that the odds are also statistically significant higher for any of the four grandchild-grandparent dyads except for the grandchild-maternal grandmother dyad after controlling for parental and grandparental divorce. The odds of mothers perceiving an emotionally close relationship with the grandchild were roughly three times among grandchildren who went on outings 'frequently' relative to grandchildren who 'never' did so.

Discussion of findings

The aim of this chapter has been to examine the effects of the frequency of three activities of daily living shared between grandchildren and their grandparents on the mothers' perception of an emotionally close relationship between these two generational groups within the intergenerational relationships frameworks and the lifecourse approach. The effects of each of these three variables about activities of daily living were predicted for four different grandchild-grandparent dyads, namely the grandchild and their maternal and paternal grandmothers and grandfathers. The analysis of the effects of these activities of daily living on the development of emotionally close relationships between grandchildren and grandparents also takes into account a series of individual, familial and structural aspects of grandchildren's

families. It is also relevant to consider the effects of lifecourse events such as divorce or separation in the parental and grandparental generation on the opportunities of grandparents for engaging in the life of grandchildren and develop an emotionally close relationship. Thus, a second aim was to explore the association between the nature and frequency of practices of everyday life and a mother's perception of emotional closeness when controlling for parental and grandparental divorce.

The results in this chapter showed that grandchildren who engage more regularly in any of the three shared activities of daily living with their grandparents have higher odds of being perceived by the child's mother as emotionally close. These results are aligned with the social theories that point to a mutually interdependent dimensions of solidarity between family members in the family (Bengtson and Roberts, 1991). The results in many respects confirm that the strength of intergenerational solidarity between generations in the form of exchanges of support and shared activities of daily life build stronger bonds in other dimensions of solidarity such as the affectual solidarity. However, this chapter also adds to the existing literature as it studied the effects of these activities on emotional closeness for four types of grandparents using a representative data from a large number of children of the same cohort aged approximately three years taking into account different family living situations and socio-economic backgrounds.

The results of the multivariate regression models showed that the frequency of engaging in shared activities of daily living such as 'looking after' or 'going on outings' are particularly significant in developing emotionally close ties between generations. Previous research has already indicated that grandchildren and grandparents that engage more often in a series of activities together have stronger ties (e.g. Kennedy 1992), albeit much of this research has not taken into account individual, familial and structural characteristics of different generations within a family. However, the analysis confirmed that these activities do not have the same importance in promoting close emotional ties between generations in the four grandchild-grandparent dyads. For instance, 'looking after' the grandchild is the most important activity for enacting emotional close ties between the grandchild and any of the four types of grandparents. Although 'babysitting' had also a positive influence on enacting

emotional closeness, this functional activity has a much lower influence than ‘looking after’ the child. In fact, grandchildren ‘going on outings’ with the grandparents had a stronger influence on emotional closeness in any of the four grandchild-grandparent dyads. This is an interesting finding as it points to different meanings and significance of distinct practices or activities of daily living done by grandparents with their grandchildren in building, and in particular the significance these activities have to enact a quality of being emotionally close to each other.

The results in this chapter also highlighted that in any of the three activities of daily living the grandparents participated in, there were some similarities and differences between grandmothers and grandfathers. Particularly, the analysis found an active role of grandfathers in the life of grandchildren through traditionally gendered practices such as ‘looking after’ the grandchild or ‘babysitting’. As noted elsewhere, grandfathers might engage in traditionally feminised activities as a means to challenge masculinities (Mann et al., 2016). However, one of the limitations of the present study is that it has not been possible to discern the extent to which grandmothers and grandfathers contributed to childcare when they were in couple. Yet, the findings in this chapter dispute previous research on the ‘detachment’ of grandfathers from family life.

In this context, the apparent gendered and generational patterning of emotional connections between grandchildren and grandparents and gendered expectations of the grandparents’ involvement in the life of grandchildren was evident in the results for the effects of the frequency of grandchildren ‘going on outings’ with their grandparents on emotional closeness. The results indicated that the grandchild’s maternal and paternal grandfathers had higher odds to be perceived by the mother of the child as having an emotionally close relationship compared to the grandchild’s maternal and paternal grandmothers if they either went ‘frequently’ or ‘rarely’ on outings with the grandchild relative to grandchildren who never went on outings with the grandfather. This is in line with previous studies indicating a gender division of activities between grandmothers and grandfathers (e.g. Kennedy, 1992b), with the former typically engaging in nurturing activities, and the latter in instrumental ones. Alternatively, the findings in this study can be read from a more critical perspective. Grandfathers’

involvement in the life of their grandchildren might be more visible and recognised when engaging in outdoors and leisure activities, which are enacted outside the feminised space of the household (Tarrant, 2013). More importantly, differences in the perception of closeness between grandparents give particular credit to the notion of the principle of ‘linked lives’ (Elder, 1998) that suggest that individuals’ needs and actions in different generations in a family are interdependent with each other.

One of the possible factors influencing the extent of participation and perception of emotional closeness in grandchild-grandparent relationships is divorce or separation in the parental and grandparental generation. As shown in previous research, divorce in the parental and grandparental generation is likely to change the opportunities for interaction between generations in a family (Mahne and Huxhold, 2012). The results in this chapter show that activities of daily living do not protect against negative effects of grandparental divorce on close emotional ties between the grandchild and her/his grandparents. Despite being engaged through caring and leisure activities, grandchildren with divorced grandparents were perceived as having lower odds of being emotionally close compared to grandchildren with grandparents in intact couples, albeit this was not the case for the grandchild-paternal grandmother dyad. Alternatively, divorce in the parental generation increased the odds of having an emotionally close relationship between the grandchild and maternal grandparents compared to grandchildren with non-divorced grandparents. Yet, either negative or positive effects of parental divorce were not found for the two paternal dyads. These results suggest that relationships across generations by the lineage of the grandparent play a role in shaping close emotional relationships as they might differently constrain or facilitate the development of a close connection between generations in a family. These findings are partly in line with the ‘matrilineal advantage’ (Chan and Elder, 2000) in which generational bonds are favoured through the maternal side. The gender and family lineage advantage following parental divorce found in the literature on grandparenthood (Dench and Ogg, 2002) is partly supported in this analysis, albeit the effects of grandparental divorce or separation on the different activities of daily living on emotional closeness between grandchildren and grandparents was not found. Importantly, the results in this chapter are interesting as they cast some doubts on the literature on grandparenting suggesting that divorce in the family has negative

consequences for paternal grandparents, but positively influences the contact and participation of maternal grandparents in the grandchildren's lives. Nonetheless, some further research is needed to clearly discern the effects of parental and grandparental divorce or separation on the opportunities for grandparents to develop an emotionally close relationship with their grandchildren. This will be further explored in the chapters 8 and 9 with data obtained from interviews of grandparents, and might help elucidate further the *agency* of grandparents in maintaining close ties with the family despite parental divorce (Timonen and Doyle, 2012).

In summary, the findings in this chapter revealed that the development of emotional close ties between grandchildren and their grandparents is built upon complex relational activities of daily living that range from instrumental to more leisure-oriented activities. Importantly, it signals that the variations in grandchild-grandparent emotionally close relationships does necessarily need to take into account the different ways grandparents engage in the life of their grandchildren. Also, this chapter shows that strains in the various generations within a family following grandparental divorce has a negative effect on emotional closeness even when controlling for a series of activities that grandchildren do with their grandparents. When considering the enactment of emotional close ties between grandchildren and grandparents, future research should take into account grandparenting lifecourse experiences in the ways they engage with grandchildren and the extent to which these shape emotional closeness with them.

Chapter Eight

Intergenerational emotional ties and practices of intimacy

Introduction

The previous three chapters have quantitatively explored the association of a series of socio-demographic, family, structural and relational variables with emotional closeness between grandchildren and four types of grandparents. While these analyses have been conducted using data from a large representative survey of children born in Scotland (more details in chapter 4), the next two chapters will use qualitative in-depth interviews to closely examine grandparenting intimate practices of both grandmothers and grandfathers with their grandchildren. The sample of grandparents was derived from a representative sample of a cohort of children born in Scotland, specifically the sweep 3 of the Birth Cohort 1 of the Growing Up in Scotland study. Initially, this process involved selecting cases (i.e. the study child) from the survey; 600 cases (out of over 4,000) were randomly selected, although there was an oversampling of children with divorced parents and grandparents and families with grandparents deemed by the child's mother to *not* have an emotionally close relationship. Also, more paternal grandparents and grandfathers (regardless of the family lineage) were included in the preliminary sample. This strategy responded to the PhD aims to capture the process of divorce on emotional closeness between grandparents and grandchildren, as well as to capture the experiences of grandparents who are not emotionally close to a grandchild. Given the limited grandparenting studies investigating the effects of lineage and grandfathering on the relationship with grandchildren, it was deemed appropriate to oversample paternal grandparents and grandfathers in general. This initial sampling was cross-checked by ScotCen towards the families that had given permission to be contacted for a follow-up study, and in the event of a non-eligible case it was substituted by a similar one. Once this first stepped was completed, a letter was sent to the respondent of the survey (in this study it was only the child's mother) explaining the project and a consent form asking for the details of the selected grandparent. A total of 600 letters were sent to the survey respondent, with a response rate of 11.3%.

Twenty-four qualitative interviews were then conducted with grandparents, either both grandparents of a couple or alone. In seven occasions both grandparents participated in the interview, in twelve it was only the grandmother and in only five interviews a grandfather was the only participant. These grandparents had between 1 and 7 children with a total of 61 children (seven of them had no children on their own). The number of grandchildren these grandparents had ranged between 1 and 8; only two grandparents had only one grandchild, up to seven participants had two grandchildren, five of them had three, four of them with four grandchildren, two with five, three with seven and only one with eight grandchildren. The age of these 86 grandchildren ranged between 1 and 25, although most of them were aged 11 or younger. These 31 grandparents were aged between 52 and 84 with a mean age of 67; only three grandparents were younger than 60, eleven were aged between 60 and 69, fourteen were aged between 70 and 79 and three were older than 80 years. Most of the interviewee grandparents (15) were in intact couple, only two of them were divorced and two more had re-married, and in five interviews the partner had died. Most children (only children who had at least one child) of the participant grandparents were either married or in couple, although in 8 different occasions grandparents had a divorced daughter and another grandparent had a divorced son. Finally, in each interview the mother had reported that the targeted grandparent was emotionally close to the grandchild participating in the GUS study. However, differences in emotional ties were unveiled between the grandparents and their other grandchildren, and details about changes in the intimate bonds between grandparents and the grandchild in the GUS study surfaced in the course of the interview.

The main objective of this chapter, divided in two parts, is to discuss the data from the interviews against the backdrop of theoretical frameworks on grandparenting and key ideas on transformations of intimacy and intimate relationships, practices of intimacy, and relational emotional reflexive approaches. In the first part, I explore how grandparents make sense of their close ties with grandchildren, and the structuring of grandparent-grandchild intimate relationships. In this context, I interrogate moral understandings about grandparenting and I foreground the ambivalences and emotional asymmetries existing in intergenerational family relationships as part of the social life of grandparents.

In the second section, I explore the processes that constitute intimacy in grandparent-grandchild relationships. I interrogate the ‘democratisation’ thesis of intimate relationships through the significance of dialogical exchanges in grandparent-grandchild relationships, while I also focus on the varied forms of cognitive and bodily practices that are given significance and shape the quality of the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren. Also, I explore the intersection of practices of intimacy and gender, particularly looking at how grandfathers navigate through masculinities in the ways to ‘display’ feelings and emotions towards their grandchildren.

Making sense and structuring intergenerational intimate relationships

Grandparental emotional ties

Against the backdrop of rapid social change, it is claimed that traditional social structures of social life such as family have led way to fluid and uncertain realities in which the individual is the solely biographer of their identity and self and that interpersonal intimate relationships are purposely oriented towards self-fulfilment (e.g. Beck and Beck-Gernsheim 1995; Giddens 1992). The downplaying of ‘family’ has been matched with criticism by pointing at the continued significance that ‘family’ confer to relationships and practices of everyday life (Morgan, 1996), the meanings and ideals associated with it, as well as the emotions placed upon ideals of unity and togetherness (McCarthy 2012). In my interviews most grandparents often talked of providing for their grandchildren through dedicating material and temporal resources such as helping with childminding responsibilities, supporting their adult children and providing advise if wanted as something which is part of their grandparenting role. They often expressed a family-centred approach oriented around close ties that comes with grandparenthood. Grandparents articulated moral understandings of their investment in grandchildren based on a heightened onus to foster their emotional well-being, something which they interpreted as part of the responsibilities of grandparenting. For instance, Rhona, a paternal grandmother with seven grandchildren

of four different sons, emphasised the importance of her grandparenting role and the positive feelings afforded by ideals of ‘family’.

‘I want them [grandchildren] to be happy people. And I want them to...I want them feel secure and feel happy.’

‘I think it's just nice to be part of a family, basically. That's why I think it's nice to be part of a unit.’ (Rhona, in couple with seven grandchildren)

Eleanor, a maternal and paternal grandmother of three grandchildren aged between 1 and 11 had had a particularly intense involvement in the life of her eldest grandchildren in order to help her divorced daughter conciliate work and family life. She also emphasised grandparents’ role in grandchildren’s *emotional wellbeing*.

‘Responsibilities? I'd say to make sure your grandchildren are happy. Er... happy, feel loved, cared about’. (Eleanor, in couple with three grandchildren)

The rhetoric linking affective ties with family is shared by many of the interviewee grandparents, and quite vividly made explicit in Sophia’s account. In speaking of the importance of her grandchildren, this grandmother of seven grandchildren of two sets from her two daughters emphasised a natural emotional bond with them. Notably, she naturalised the affective ties with them as intrinsically part of the grandparent-grandchild relationship. As well as declaring their equivalence, Sophia made a distinction and traced boundaries between the direct ties with her own children and the ‘once removed’ ties with her grandchildren.

‘They are your grandchildren, you know, I love them to bits, you know. Ehm...I just want them to be, you know...like you want your own children, the same things. Once removed that sort of thing. You just want the same things for them than you wanted for your children, you know, to be happy’. (Sophia, in couple with seven grandchildren)

As suggested by Jamieson (2011), the link between family and intimacy is found in societies that value family relationships as a means to form intimate ties. Those who shared normative view of grandparents’ responsibilities for the well-being of younger generations in a family may have been more likely to participate in research about

grandparents' participation in their grandchildren's lives. The norm of grandparenting of 'being there' was cited by several grandparents as the correct way of 'being' part of a family, although as noted by others (Ferguson et al. 2004) these moral guidelines are typically vague. In speaking of the responsibilities of grandparents, Emma, a maternal grandmother who expressed care and affect for her daughter and two grandchildren, emphasised the variability and mutability of normative understandings of grandparenting. Interestingly, her account shows a contraposition between prescriptive norms of action given by the social position of a grandparent and 'genuine' individual feelings of affection that motivated her actions. This apparent mutually exclusive stand between family obligations and feelings of love is somehow embedded within cultural understanding of kinship and negotiated family obligations (Finch and Mason, 1991). What is interesting in Emma's account is her frontal opposition to having "particular responsibilities" towards her daughter and grandchildren and, instead, a higher individual ethos that drives her commitment and investment in other younger family members as a means through which she made sense of her actions.

'The responsibilities are the ones you make them. It varies. I don't see myself as having particular responsibilities. All I do is for love and to help my daughter'. (Emma, re-married with two grandchildren)

Most of the grandparents' accounts appeared to be exclusively centred on the individual and emotional well-being of their children and grandchildren and comprised of actions that could be described as selfless and loving. However, data from the interviews indicate that grandparents also sought to fulfil their own emotional needs through engaging and investing in their grandchildren. Grandparents use their *agency* to make themselves available in order to maintain contact with their grandchildren and retain a sense of 'family unity' (Timonen and Doyle, 2012). Emma, for example, speaks of the emotional gratification she achieved through spending time with her children and grandchildren, something that she promoted by regularly organising a meal on Sunday as part of a family tradition.

'It's important to me because I feel happy when we are together. I feel, em, there is nothing...no way I would like to spend a weekend more than us all getting together for a meal'. (Emma, re-married with two grandchildren)

Interviewee grandparents generally spoke of positive sentiments and feelings elicited through committing and participating in the life of their grandchildren. In speaking of the time spent childminding, babysitting and going on outings, Deborah, a paternal grandmother who had regularly provided some childcare for her two grandchildren, expressed how these activities rewarded her and her husband emotionally. Interestingly, she voiced a potential sense of loss if the access to emotional reciprocity derived from the contact with the two granddaughters was jeopardised by structural constraints.

'They just... they keep us so happy; they make us laugh. Oh, we would really miss that if they decided to go away, which I think they won't'. (Deborah and Alan, in couple with two grandchildren)

The heightened emotion expressed by grandparents when speaking about the relationship with the grandchildren in their family life cannot be separated from the meaning and value of family for individuals enriched by the quality of loving and close relationships. The moral and personal significance of 'connectivity' of kinship are still being stated whether it is expressed in the form of a selfless commitment towards younger generations and/or as an emotional self-gratification. Ideals and values of 'family' have not withered away and there is a continuing significance of family in making sense and structuring intergenerational relationships.

Emotional ambivalences in grandparenting

The cultural and personal understandings of intimate family life expressed by many of the interviewee grandparents provide little indication on *how* these grandparents experience it and the variability and incidence of intergenerational dynamics in eliciting and forming feelings of closeness. There are theoretical and analytical caveats to limiting the conceptualisation of intimacy and love to moral understandings as such a focus neglects the messiness of life as lived that include individual, social and structural contradictions encountered in the course of family life (e.g. Connidis and McMullin, 2002). Some researchers have claimed that intergenerational relationships within a family combine positive and negative sentiments while continuing to describe

the relationship as emotionally close, a situation coined ‘ambivalent’ (Luescher and Pillemer, 1998, Connidis and McMullin, 2002). For example, Olivia is a maternal and paternal grandmother of four grandchildren who had daily contact with her daughter’s children, aged 11 and 15. She had given significant childcare for her daughter’s children and supported her daughter emotionally and financially. Although she expressed that she had always had a good and close relationship with her grandchildren, she admitted difficulties in maintaining close emotional ties with them, particularly with the eldest grandchild. Despite her efforts to subscribe to ideas of ‘good grandparenting’, her expectations of emotional reciprocity were often contradicted by her reality in everyday life. This situation of ambivalence is clearly expressed by her feelings of closeness with her grandchildren and resentment of daily interactions.

‘They [grandchildren] come in and the advice is take an interest in your children's schooling, take an interest in what they do...what do you get back? “Fine”, and that's it. How did you get on at school? “Fine”. That's the conversation finished and if you ask them too many questions, you're interfering, you know. And I says, “well, we're supposed to take an interest”’.

‘Well, it can be rowdy at times. It's great to have a day to yourself, in peace and quietness. But no, no, we get on fine’. (Olivia, widow with four grandchildren)

The heightened feelings of closeness that most grandparents expressed about the relationship with their grandchildren were at times at odds with their personal experiences and preferences about the extent of childcare provision and help towards their children and grandchildren. The notion of ‘structural ambivalence’ (Connidis, 2010, Connidis, 2015) is a useful concept for describing paradoxes and ambivalences in the ways grandparents feel and experience relationships with their grandchildren against normative relational models of family and family responsibilities. Some grandparents mentioned emotional ambivalences combining strong feelings of love and personal reward related to being responsible of their grandchildren with mutually coexisting physical strains associated with their involvement in the life of their grandchildren. In speaking of experiences of intensive childcare, Orla and Mark emphasised ambivalent feelings of their grandparenting role.

'Orla: We enjoy having them [grandchildren] and things like that. But I mean after you've had them a full day or overnight, I'm quite glad... not from the point of view I don't want them...

Mark: It's not that we don't like them...

Orla: We're tired. You're tired. You physically don't have the energy to keep up with them. But we always look forward to seeing them'. (Orla and Mark, in couple with two grandchildren)

Ambivalent situations in grandparents' life can also emerge from contradictions between parenting and grandparenting norms, grandparents' preferences and behaviours. Studies on grandparenting in family life has found two often contradicting norms, the norm of 'being there' and the norm of 'non-interfering'; these two norms might also enter in contradiction with other norms such as the norm of autonomy of the grandparent from family responsibilities and that of independence of adult children to decide on what is appropriate for their own children (Mason et al., 2007). In Mason and colleagues' study, they found that despite grandparents' strong sense of the rules governing grandparenting, grandparents' preferences and behaviours did not always align with these prescriptive norms. This is similarly found in my interviews with grandparents. This ambivalent situation was for some grandparents a source of tension and generated emotional strains about their role of grandparenting and in the relationship with their grandchildren. For example, Lucy and her husband, Tom, had a son with two daughters living nearby, but despite the inexistence of a structural constraint and their active interest to regularly see the grandchildren, they found the contact was insufficient. However, they particularly found it difficult to come to terms with the norm of parental autonomy, which negatively reverted into their feelings about the relationship with the son's children.

I: How do you feel about the relationship you have with the grandchildren?

Lucy: Not very well, because you're only the grandparents. Not the father. And I've been told that.

I: You've been told that?

Lucy: Yes, that's theirs not ours. And I interfere, and I say – "you shouldn't do that"-. That's their child not mine. (Lucy and Tom, in couple with four grandchildren of two sets)

As suggested by Robin Mann (2007) the significance of the norm of non-interference among grandparents talks of the centrality of parent-child relations as foremost important relationship in the family. For many grandparents, however, ambivalent situations were found to prompt tense situations that needed to be negotiated or circumvented between them and their children or children-in-law. The quality of the grandparent-adult child relationship points to the possibilities of generating a close relationship between grandparents and grandchildren (May et al., 2012). In the previous example of Lucy and Tom, the relationship they have with their son's wife is filled with tension, something that is shown when they bitterly referred to her as the "boss" and cited that they "can't say anything to her". The difficulties to negotiate a more regular involvement and fears of a growing conflict precluded these grandparents to fulfil their normative expectations of grandparenthood and individual emotional ties with grandchildren.

The social life of grandparents is in occasions filled with ambivalences that originate from contradictions between preferences, behaviours and grandparenting norms. Crucially, grandparents emphasised moments and circumstances in which grandparenting elicit ambivalent feelings epitomised by a strong sense of closeness and resentment stemming from difficulties to materialise their ideals of grandparenting. The analysis of the interviews points to the need to focus on lived experiences of grandparenting and the analytical openness to multiple coexisting contradictory feelings and sentiments of filial obligation, preferences and behaviours.

Grandparent-grandchild emotional asymmetries and paradoxes

The variability in the quality of the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren within the same family has often been ignored in research on intergenerational relationships (see discussion in chapter 1). Instead of assuming a homogenous emotional exchange between a grandparent and the pool of grandchildren, the findings from my data show emotional asymmetries in the ways grandparents feel towards their grandchildren. Yet, there is a strong normative assumption shared by the large majority of grandparents that showing or 'displaying' (Dermott and Seymour, 2011) emotional favouritism towards one grandchild over the

others is moral wrong-doing. Although in a different research context, the work of Arlie Hochschild (1979) on 'feeling rules' bring some insight into the socially sanctioning ideologies of emotion experiences and feelings in particular social situations that explain how people feel. However, the data from the interviews with grandparents indicate conflicts and contradictions between these rules as general guidelines of behaviour and lived experience. The first example of emotional asymmetries between grandparents and grandchildren is Anne, a maternal grandmother with four grandchildren from her two daughters.

'Although I've got four of them [grandchildren], and I love them all, know what I mean, but I think there is always going to be that special bond with me and Martin [grandson]. And I don't know if it's because Nicky [daughter] was young and... or I was younger when she... you know, when he [grandson] came in to our lives. I really don't know. But... or is it because he stayed here for a length of time? I really don't know. But I know there is more a special bond with me and Martin. Although when I spend time with the rest of them, I feel, you know, the exact same, but there is... it's horrible... it is horrible to say that there is just this special closeness with me and him, know what I mean'. (Anne, in couple with three grandchildren)

The second example is Sam, a re-married grandfather with no contact with his son's children, although he had had a regular involvement and close relationship with the new partner's children's children.

'[...] and I think when I look at the grand weans, they're all good. They've all got their own wee attributes that they can do, they're good at. But you shouldn't say it, but Caitlin's [granddaughter] my favourite. You shouldn't say things like that, you know. If the family heard me saying that they'd go mental, but she is because she was brought up and she had a hard time when she was young'. (Sam, re-married with eight grandchildren)

The intimate quality of the relationship between grandparents and their grandchildren are constituted through various relational processes, but importantly these relationships are attached meaning through lived experiences. Jane Ribbens McCarthy (2012) has analysed the different forms of relatedness and selfhood invoked in the meanings individuals attach to 'family' and noted the importance and centrality of processes of 'relationality' (Roseneil and Ketokivi, 2016) in the ways grandparents give meaning to their everyday life experiences with grandchildren and *make sense of*

the emotional asymmetries between them and their grandchildren. In the interviews grandparents talked of a special kind of relationship built upon relational lived experiences with their grandchildren over time in order to make sense of the quality of the relationship they had with their grandchildren. This is often attributed to circumstances such as co-habitation, such as is the previous example of Anne, intensive periods of childcare or the quality of relationship between grandparents and the middle generation. In the case of Margaret, a maternal and paternal grandmother with five grandchildren of two sets, she remarked the contingency and ‘relationality’ of intergenerational relationships that enabled or constrained the formation of a close bond between her and the various grandchildren.

‘Ewan [grandson] is affectionate to me. He’s an affectionate boy and he demonstrates the affection. Em... I think you bond when the children are young. I have three other grandchildren, and I only feel close to the first one [Ewan]. The other two, I didn’t much to do with them when they were young. I haven’t bonded with them the same. I think it has to do with bonding when they’re young and being around when they’re small’. (Margaret, widow with five grandchildren)

These accounts point to the link between relational complexities and intergenerational emotional patternings with grandchildren. The emphasis is on the relational processes through which differences in the quality of the grandparent-grandchild relationship is enacted and maintained, and the meanings attached to these relational experiences within ‘family’ that become significant for the individual. This calls for flexible and shifting interpretations of intimacy and the processes by which intimate relationships are enabled, enacted and maintained in everyday practices between grandparents and their grandchildren.

Intergenerational practices of intimacy

Significant intimate exchanges of communication

Shifting the analysis of intimacy away from functional or structural explanations turns the attention to exploring relational processes of intimacy in family life (Roseneil and Ketoviki 2016). Anthony Giddens (1992) claims that intimate relationships in modern

reflexive societies are constituted and maintained through the process of talking and exchanging inner qualities and feelings between self and 'other'. The process of 'disclosing self' is part of a larger process of democratisation of intimate relationships in which rules have led way to negotiation and reasoning. The findings from the data point to the importance interviewee grandparents attach to talking and knowing about their grandchildren as a means to generate and appraise the quality of the relationship with them. Most interviewee grandparents expressed dialogical exchanges with grandchildren encompassing a large array of topics such as likes and dislikes, what they do at school, friends or problems of any kind. The significance of engaging in conversations and maintain fluid communication rests on the importance of the process of acquiring a deep knowing of 'other', which points to the social and cultural ideal of disclosing self as the stronghold of intimacy (Jamieson, 1998). For example, Anne explained the special feeling she has with her eldest grandchild, aged 11, a relationship distinguished by a deep knowledge of him.

'But I think because he's [grandchild] so open and he tells you everything, and he always had done, it's that communication, you know, with him. Know what I mean, it's like you know everything about him and I think that's the closeness I've got with him'. (Anne, in couple with three grandchildren)

Findings from the interviews, however, show that dialogical exchanges between the grandparents and their grandchildren did not exclusively fit the democratic ethos of mutual and open disclosure of inner qualities to the other, but they were used as both a means to generate a sense of close connection and emotional ties and as a means of looking out for information about how to please, how to give appropriate presents and do things together that appeal to the grandchild. For instance, Orla, a paternal grandmother of two grandchildren, saw conversations with grandchildren an opportunity for generating intimacy through knowing the other without referencing to an intense democratic disclosure of feelings (Morgan, 2011a, Jamieson, 2011).

'I think it means that you feel closer to them. You know more about what's going on with their lives and what they think about things and things like that. You find it more about what they think about...what they like what they don't

like, what they might like to do or do something or... (Orla and Mark, in couple with two grandchildren)

Other grandparents' accounts suggest strategies through which grandparents create conditions to enhance and gather knowledge about their grandchildren. Take for example the description of Rose, a paternal grandmother with seven grandchildren. She explained the ways she planned her time together with her grandchildren to facilitate a more open conversation such as organising an outing with one grandchild at a time to capture her/his full attention.

'What I have done maybe recently this year is on an odd occasion take them in a singly, em, individually because I prefer to do it that way, em, maybe for a snack lunch somewhere and it's good because you've got them for you, they're sitting opposite you, they can't go anywhere, upstairs to play with their stuff. And it's surprising what you learn'. (Rose, divorced with seven grandchildren).

Data from the interviews indicate that grandchildren are not the solely object of information mining, but they are active agents in enquiring and looking for information about grandparents. Grandchildren might seek to look out for the well-being of their grandparents, and query about their past as an action to affirm a sense of closeness. These exchanges are also acknowledged and given importance by grandparents as signifiers of the quality of the relationship with the grandchild, as well as the quality of the exchange of the communication.

'No, the night before. That's when he phoned me and he says, where are you? And the first thing he ever asks you is, what's your day been? Or, what have you been up to then? You know, and he... you know, you tell him. You know, he wants to know, know what I mean. Or he...you know, if he phones me or whatever, know what I mean, just for a chat or some days it's just silly wee Snapchats he sends me'. (Anne, in couple with four grandchildren)

'I mean, she texts me and just says, hi gran, how's you, love you, miss you'. (Moirra and Tom, in couple with one grandchild)

The crux of my argument is that dialogical exchanges between grandparents and grandchildren may not need a deep exchange of inner qualities of the self to the other to instigate closeness and intimacy as predicted in the democratisation thesis. Knowing the other is a process that consists of building trust, confidence and expressions of love and affect that build intimacy. While talking might certainly be used to express emotions, it often relates to a vast number of routine day-to-day experiences and suggests that the lack of these exchanges preclude from forging close intergenerational ties.

Embodied forms of intimacy

Communication and exchanges of feelings of love and care between individuals might be enacted through a means other than dialogical exchanges. Non-verbal forms form part of everyday family relationships, and also work at producing a sense of being emotionally close (Gabb, 2008, Morgan, 2011b). Everyday bodily practices are argued elsewhere to generate intimacy as they might encapsulate and be articulated to convey feelings and display affect (Jamieson et al., 2011). Grandparents might engage in such embodied practices when looking after or babysitting their grandchildren. The symbolic and multiple layered meanings and understandings of communication also refer to symbolic gestures of touch, smile, think and play. Giving a hug, for instance, is often mentioned by interviewee grandparents as a significant embodied practice of intimacy that ‘displays’ (Dermott and Seymour, 2011) love and affect. For instance, George, a maternal grandfather with two grandchildren, expressed the ‘need’ to have a physical exchange with grandchildren to produce and affirm an emotional connection between the two of them.

‘[...] if they're [grandchildren] in here, they won't leave without a kiss and a cuddle to both of us, you know. Arms go around you, and a cuddle and a kiss, that's, you know, that's the way we've shown them and it seems to have rubbed off. I thought by now, at 13, he [grandchild] would, you know, be all shy, but even if it's in the street, he'll still show some affection. So, it's obviously worked, you know’. (George, in couple with two grandchildren)

Bodily practices in the form of tactile exchanges are then practices that *work at* producing intimacy, but also as means to express caring, loving and being there for the

other, these are meaningful practices that stand for complex relational and emotional processes and symbolise complex feelings that embed relational and practical dimensions. Rhona expressed these emotional shorthand as an additional form to express love and affection to her two grandchildren.

Interviewer: 'Are they important, these cuddles, hugs...?'

Rhona: 'Oh, yes, 'cause that's how the children know that you... well, they know that you love them, but if you can hug them and cuddle them up...'
(Rhona and David, in couple with two grandchildren)

Embodied practices may fulfil the symbolic and material purpose of working and sustaining a 'special' quality of the relationship with 'significant others' that does not require a verbal articulation of feelings and can also serve the symbolic purpose of 'being there' and forging a special bond that goes beyond emotional self-fulfilment, something that was clearly cited by Sophia.

'They [hugs] mean a lot. Er...I get a feeling of...I don't know...completeness. You know, just sort of oneness...er...I think they work both ways. I think, hugs, you know, I'd never hug anyone of them if didn't want to, but they all do want hugs and that and... They're just a very tactile way of...not communication but almost communication. You know, the...you know, I'm here for you, you know, if anything ever, you know, you've got me'. (Sophia, in couple with seven grandchildren)

It also points to the fact that bodily acts such as hugging and kissing might be imposed by the parents and/or grandparents as a means to teach intimate bodily exchanges, foster a relational connection and display emotions and feelings of love for each other. Thus, the parental control of affectionate bodily acts is of concern in identifying and signifying these acts. However, adjectives as "big" and "sincere" are typically used by grandparents to make sense of, distinguish and appraise the special quality of the bodily interaction. They are modulators of language that surpass the verbal status as they refer to aspects of the relationship that embody emotions and feelings. These adjectives are positively considered qualities that signify the strength and the tone of the relationship, and tear down the generational relations imposed by the parent-child relationship.

‘And they don’t just do it because they have to do it, they do it because they want to do it. It’s not as if they’re being pushed, you know. Go and give him a wee cuddle, you know. But as soon as you open the door they come straight up to you, the whole lot. So...And Caitlin [granddaughter] is very attentive that way. She’ll walk in the door and give me a kiss and my father a kiss and she’ll say, do you want a cup of tea? And away she goes...’ (Sam, re-married with eight grandchildren)

Intimate bodily exchanges are part of the everyday lived experiences in grandparent-grandchild relationships and they are important in enabling, enacting and maintaining a sense of intimacy. These shorthand emotional expressions stand for more complex instances and feelings of love and affect that are significant for grandparents. Bodily practices are intersected by meanings of family and cultural understandings of how love, care and affect is transmitted.

Being and spending time together

Activities of everyday life are used to affirm particular relational and emotional qualities that work at differentiating ‘others’ from ‘significant others’. The ‘relational turn’ in family studies (Roseneil and Ketokivi, 2016) has brought some general consensus that intimate relationships are formed through everyday life practices, rather than ascribed by structural positions within social institutions such as marriage or *the* ‘family’. In line with other research on intimate relationships, the findings of my research point to the significance of activities of daily living in the formation of intimacy between grandparents and grandchildren. It is through ‘practices of intimacy’ that individuals create and maintain a sense of being close, that is feeling special and attuned to each other (Jamieson 2011). For example, Sam, a re-married maternal grandfather, spoke of various activities carried out with one of his grandchildren, a granddaughter aged 11 whose relationship with her was perceived as particularly close; these activities shaped relational and emotional exchanges and embed meanings about the affective nature of intergenerational relationships.

‘We go fishing together. We used to do a lot of things together because she wasn’t one of these children that wants, wants, wants. She just wants, you know, to be in your company, go out for the day. Even just go and sit in a park and feed the ducks or whatever. But she was... You could sit and talk to her and have a conversation. And I went, if like we went fishing and I’d say, leave your phone at

home, then she would leave her phone at home. And we would sit in the chairs and eat our piece and, she's good. And I miss her'. (Sam, re-married with eight grandchildren)

The emphasis is on being together, enjoying each other's company and the special character of these moments that become important for the sense of self. Practices of intimacy are then the interlude through which individuals enact a sense of being intimate to a 'significant other' (Jamieson et al., 2011). Importantly, it is the processes of meaning-making of these activities of daily living that make them become meaningful in relation with 'other'. For instance, liking the same TV programmes was of special importance to Anne in maintaining a sense of a special quality in the relationship with one of her four grandchildren as it links being together in a co-joint physical space with a special moment that stands for a sense of close connection and being alike.

'But when we are together, it's quality...we've got TV programmes that I tape for him and me and him watch them and he's a Star Wars fan'. (Anne, in couple with four grandchildren)

Importantly, most of the grandparents mentioned that doing things together with their grandchildren was a means to be physically in the same place and space, that is they would be able to have access to the grandchild and drew positive feelings from this mutual co-presence. Grandparents' accounts about the importance of being together with their grandchildren is often intermingled with discourses about 'family'. David Morgan (1996; 2011) argues 'doing' family is practised in everyday life through activities that individuals attach meaning and significance associated with ideals of family life and relationships. Enacting and sustaining daily life activities act as bridging the world of imagined relationships of grandparenting and family life with that of materialities and practicalities of lived experiences. In speaking of the opportunity to spend time together with their grandchildren, Margaret, a widow grandmother of five grandchildren of two sets, made fairly clear the significance of various moments that affirm 'family' through doing things together.

'It's special because you are all together enjoying each other. Because you can have just a special a day down at the caravan some summer evenings sitting by the river and having a bonfire. That can be just as special. It's not to do with the fact that's Christmas or birthdays or something. It's a very special family time. If you like your family, I suppose, it's special family time being together and doing things together'. (Margaret, widow with five grandchildren)

The findings from the data points to the linkages between 'being together' and 'spending time' as key elements in constituting grandparent-grandchild intimate relationships. As others have suggested (e.g. Jamieson, 2005, Jamieson, 1998) time is a significant resource that shape patternings of intimate relationships. Time engulfs and shapes relationships, structure activities and set limits to practices of everyday life, as well as act as 'gift of emotion'. In a study of parents and children intimate practices, Gabb (2008) found enabling time for children worked as 'emotion currency', which holds weight in creating a sense of family. I have also found in my data of grandparent-grandchild relationships that time is significant in interpreting and attaching a distinct meaning in the relationship grandparents have with their grandchildren and as a means to generate close ties.

'I was delighted with the first grandchild and I had enough handling of her to get very fond of her and close to her. Again I think it was contact, close contact and being with her regularly'. (Margaret)

The emphasis on spending 'enough' time points to a qualitatively different and meaningful temporality that enables the generation of intimacy. The possibilities of interacting with the grandchild structures and shapes the sense of emotional bonding between grandparents and grandchildren. Grandparents actively find time to spend with grandchildren, and as discussed in the previous section of this chapter, they seek to manage and organise the time spent with them to suit their personal needs and preferences. Crucially, these accounts point to the ways 'practices of intimacy' overlap with multiple forms of doing intimacy, and the significance and meaning of mundane and routinised activities of daily living in building intimacy.

Gendered emotionalities: masculinities and emotional forms of caring

Claims about links between gender and emotion have stressed a distinctly different nature of emotionality between males and females, in which women were considered as intrinsically possessing emotional capacities (Shields et al., 2007, Lupton, 1998). While studies of grandparenthood and emotional closeness tend to foreground the strength of emotional bonds between grandmothers and their grandchildren (e.g. Boon and Brussoni, 1996), there is limited scholarly literature on grandfathers' experiences and significance of grandfathering (Cunningham-Burley, 1987) or the ways they express emotions and feelings towards their grandchildren (Mann, 2007). In this study I asked grandmothers and grandfathers whether they perceived and/or felt differences in the ways grandmothers and grandfathers engage or are involved in the lives of their grandchildren. As elsewhere claimed, gender still plays a substantial role in patterning intimate relationships (e.g. Gabb, 2008). Unlike the democratisation and individualization thesis, the interviews with grandparents point to the continued influence of material gendered relations in the ways grandparents relate with their grandchildren. The narrative of Anne about the relationship between her husband and a grandson aged 11 emphasised gendered activities and forms of relating that conform with ideals of feminine and masculine.

'I think they've [husband and grandson] got a different...it's a completely different manly, kind of...you know, I don't...it's hard to describe. Where I'm the softer, cuddly...you know, I don't get so many cuddles that I used to, know what I mean, but...than I did before, but the softer side of him. Whereas I think he's more like a rough, kind of, with the grandparents...you know, the...with the grandfather. Well I know that's what Robert [husband] is, 'cause he's more a rougher manlier...know what I mean? He would never think of watching a cartoon or something like that, you know, if he was...you know, he had to'. (Anne, in couple with three grandchildren)

As suggested by Shields and colleagues (2007), the connection between gender-coded emotions point to ways individuals do gender through doing emotion. Anne's description of 'manly' ways of relating indicates a differently emotional form of relating, in which touch, care and emotional exchange is not part of the grandfathers' affective repertoire. Despite some grandparents' accounts talking about masculine ways of grandparenting separated from traditional 'feminine' emotional expressions

of love and care, these differences were not played against the feelings of having an emotionally close relationship.

'But 'cause Robert [husband] works away, it doesn't happen as often as it should...you know, like, they would like it to be, know what I mean. But Martin's [grandson aged 11] still...I mean, all the summer...I mean, Robert...was out with Martin, you know, cutting his grass and stuff like that. So, they have got a good bond that way'. (Anne)

For Anne, the way of creating this bond does not conform with the 'feminine' ways of displaying affection or affective exchanges. The desire of the grandfather to spend more time in the company of the grandchild can be interpreted as an alternative way of 'displaying' emotions within the confines of traditional masculinity. As previously discussed, activities of daily living such as caring, playing games or other commonplace activities can be of particular significance for grandparents in building a sense of emotional closeness. Importantly, these 'practices of intimacy' might be intersected by gendered practices (Jamieson, 2011). In the interviews with grandparents I found that physical activities such as sports or other outdoors activities were often performed by grandfathers, in contrast to indoor, caring and supportive activities often attributed to grandmothers

'My husband just needs to mention the word golf and they'll be away for hours. I just switch off at that time because, you know, but he spends a lot of time with the boys. He takes them to golf. He's taken them out because he's a golfer. So he always takes them golfing. And they always ask - what are you gonna take us again? - you know, so that's lovely, he enjoys that. 'Cause he used to go golfing with his dad when he was young. So, that's nice for him. And I always go with Lisa (daughter) to highland dancing. When there are competitions I always go with Lisa just to help her and be there for the girls, you know. You'll be there to tell them they're doing well'. (Sophia, in couple with seven grandchildren)

This gendered division of grandparenting activities is found elsewhere in the literature (Kennedy, 1992). However, the findings from the data shed light on the meanings of these activities and the significance they hold for grandmothers and grandfathers. In this case it was not possible to interview the grandfather, but accounts from other

grandfathers, such as George, show the significance of doing outdoor activities for the grandfather and the symbolic meaning they hold for them.

'Just in their company. I mean, I enjoy swimming with them, I enjoy playing about, I enjoy playing golf with them'. (George, in couple with two grandchildren)

Grandparents' gendered activities are (re)produced in cultural settings in which intimacy is achieved through subtle forms of play and spending time together, particularly in the case of grandfathers. This suggests more complex forms of emotional exchanges that do not operate within a 'natural' division of gender and emotion but are constituted through relational processes in everyday experiences that confounded with gendered and generational practices. Recent research on grandfatherhood has claimed a gendered bias in grandparenting studies, and a general disregard of experiences of grandfatherhood (Mann, 2007). Findings from my research resonates with that of a study of grandparenthood by Timonen and Arber (2012) indicating that grandfathers are redefining heteronormative expectations of gender. Some grandfathers in the interviews articulated narratives about the relationship with their grandchildren centred on the primacy of an emotional connection and 'feminine' displays of love and intimacy towards them. While in some cases the influence of gender in patterning intimate relationships between grandparents and grandchildren followed traditional masculinities, there were a few grandfathers that challenged gendered assumptions of emotional capabilities. For instance, George talked of the importance to physically relating to grandchildren to express love and affection.

'It's, you can never be stand-offish, you've got to show them love, because he didn't get it from his father. And they would come, and I've had both of them sitting on my knee, on the chair, and I've said to Luke, bet you wouldn't do this with your dad - no. Do you get a cuddle from dad - you're joking, you know. His dad is cold that way...' (George)

Interestingly, George describes his grandchildren's father, who is his son-in-law, as "cold" in intimate bodily exchanges. This lack of such affective bodily forms in the father-child relationship prompts him to act upon and enact embodied emotion exchanges. George's account can be interpreted drawing on Mary Holmes' (2015)

concept of ‘emotional reflexivity’ as a process through which individuals interpret their own and others’ emotions, and use their agency through bodies, practices and emotions to act on these interpretations. The intimate exchanges such as cuddles and hugs between him and his grandchildren are for this grandfather a significant part of the relationship with his grandchildren, and a way to emotionally compensate for what he considers as a lack of emotional provision from the father of the grandchildren.

As the examples discussed in this section demonstrate, grandfathers might engage emotionally with their grandchildren through various practices of everyday life, and constitute an important part of the sense of self and grandparenthood. This does not irremediably challenge that structural aspects of gender identity and relations have no effect on how grandfathers express and feel emotional closeness with their grandchildren, but indicates that grandfathers and grandmother form similar emotional patternings, constituting closeness, and defy traditional notions of gendered division of emotional capabilities through practising intimacy in different moments of their everyday life and contingent to contextual situations of family life.

Conclusion

The findings of this chapter point to the continuing significance of ‘family’ and family relationships in making sense of close ties between grandparents and grandchildren. The link between family and intimacy found in the narratives of grandparents unveils moral and emotional abstracts of ‘grandparenthood’. Although all the observations expressed emotional close ties with the child in the GUS study, which would point to a homogenous sample, it is important to note the diversity found among these observations, particularly as these revealed differences in the close ties with the pool of grandchildren. The diversity of grandparents was guaranteed in terms of their living arrangements, age, gender, lineage and the various combinations of relationships with the middle and youngest generations. Interestingly, all grandparents somehow shared moral understandings of grandparenthood and emotional ties indicating cultural norms associated with intimacy in families. I have suggested that intimacy in grandparenting is built and sense is made of it through moral abstracts of ‘family’ and the social

position of grandparents, while this is not in opposition with seeking to fulfil their own emotional needs together with '*doing*' family.

Although the strong consensus of a heightened emotionality is found among the interviewee grandparents, the examples presented show that grandparents' experiences might sit uncomfortably with the idea that all grandparenting relationship should be charged with positive feelings and an 'emotional parity' in all grandparent-grandchild dyads. Previous research has already identified ambivalences between grandparenting norms and everyday life experiences (e.g Mason et al 2007). I found that ambivalences around the norms of grandparenting and the heightened emotional ties in family relationships can lead to mutually coexisting feelings of love and resentment, and that difficulties in negotiating and resolving tensions enhance negative feelings. Grandparents expressed feelings of wrong-doing in emotionally and practically breaching grandparenting norms and how these are socially sanctioned in 'the family'. Also, grandparent-grandchild emotional asymmetries indicate the importance of relational processes and their contingency upon the quality of the relationship between grandparents and the middle generation that enable or constrain the development of practices that work at building intimacy. This talks to the complexities and paradoxes of grandparents lived out experiences and cultural understandings of intimacy and family life.

The findings of my study have also contributed to an understanding of processes through which grandparents build intimacy through practices of everyday life such as talking, spending time with, and sharing activities together. I found that grandparents placed a strong emphasis on the importance of knowing the grandchild's interests, likes and dislikes, as a means to appraise and build intimacy in the relationships with them. Equally they expressed that reciprocated interest from the grandchildren was a cue to appraise a special and attuned relationship with them. Also, the interview data showed embodied forms of intimacy such as cuddles and kisses as shorthand to express love and affection, and build intimacy. In addition, spending time and being together were identified as an amalgamation of instances or moments that are given meaning and take significance in the emotional self and that of their grandchildren.

I have also suggested that practices of intimacy are also gendered practices. New forms of grandfathering navigate through masculinities and engage with practices that break away with these. Grandfathers in the interviews also practised emotional exchanges through traditionally associated female roles such as looking after, providing childcare, changing nappies and doing emotion through embodied forms of intimacy such as cuddles and kisses, or stepping in as “surrogate fathers” in the perceived absence of father-child loving relationships. However, this was not a total contradiction of grandfathers reproducing gendered forms of behaving and expressing feelings, and situated grandfathering within relational gendered contexts and family life.

In summary, in order to understand grandparent-grandchild intimate relationships, it is important to consider intimacy as relational and contingent, and the processes through which important and significant aspects of everyday life builds intimacy. ‘Practices of intimacy’ is a useful analytical and theoretical concept to explore what is significant and important for grandparents in building a sense of intimacy with their grandchildren. These practices need also to be considered within cultural frameworks of grandparenthood and gendered relations. They all form part of the everyday life of individuals and allow us to understand intimacy as a complex relational process across generations and within wider contexts of family life.

Chapter Nine

Intergenerational practices of intimacy across the lifecourse

Introduction

This chapter extends the discussion initiated in chapter 8 on the meanings and significance of practices of everyday life grandparents enact and maintain with their grandchildren that build intimacy. In this chapter I aim to gain insight into how changes across the lifecourse of the interviewee grandparents, their grandchildren and adult children shape practices of intimacy in family life, and the ways grandparents amid all these changes enact and sustain intimate relationships with their grandchildren. Also, I look into how grandparents enact and maintain close emotional ties with their grandchildren following divorce or separation in the parental and grandparental generation and how these are inscribed within wider societal relations of gender and family lineage.

This chapter is divided in two sections. In the first section, I explore continuities and changes in grandparenting experiences across the life course of their grandchildren. The main aim is to explore the links between individual, family and socio-structural changes over the life course of grandparents and grandchildren, and whether, and if so how, these changes shape a sense of closeness of grandparent-grandchild relationships. I also focus on the ways grandparents exercise agency in order to maintain close relationships with their grandchildren amid personal and socio-structural opportunities for being involved in their life. I argue that grandparental agency is exercised when negotiating, adjusting and '*working at*' enabling, enacting and maintaining old and new practices of intimacy. In the subsequent section, I examine how grandparents give meaning to their emotionalities in the relationship with their grandchildren following marital breakdown in the parental generation, and the much less explored experiences of grandparental divorce and how it shapes the enactment of intimacy between grandparents and grandchildren. I demonstrate the 'connectedness' (Smart, 2007, Mason, 2004) of family members in shaping the ways grandparents can and do

emotionally relate with their grandchildren and how grandparents continue fostering 'practices of intimacy' that sustain a sense of being close and attuned to each other over the lifecourse of various generational members.

Practices of intimacy across the lifecourse of grandparents and grandchildren

Lifecourse changes and emotional continuities in grandparent-grandchild relationships

Increases in life expectancy and extended co-survivorship of grandchildren and grandparents have increased the opportunities for these two generational groups to engage in each other's lives in multiple varied forms (Uhlenberg and Kirby, 1998). Despite the evidence of a continued involvement of grandparents in the lives of their grandchildren over time, the nature and extent of involvement is dynamic, with contact between grandparents and grandchildren found to decrease as these two generations grow older (e.g. Silverstein and Marengo, 2001). Some studies found that amid these transformations the level of emotional closeness of grandparents towards their grandchildren varies at different stages of the grandparents' or grandchildren's lives. Silverstein's and Long's (1998) study noted a decline in affection over the first 14 years of the child followed by a surge in emotional closeness in the oldest old grandparents. Here, the data generated from my interviews with grandparents revealed that several of them maintained a sense of closeness despite changes in the set of opportunities to spend time together with their grandchildren and the nature and extent of their involvement. Several grandparents experienced considerably reduced opportunities to engage in the life of their grandchildren and to sustain shared activities of daily living at different moments of their grandchildren's lives. For instance, Emma, a maternal grandmother of two grandchildren, aged 11 and 13, from her daughter had provided childcare and babysitting since the early years of her grandchildren and had recently moved nearby to 'be there' when needed. She mentioned strong close feelings with both of her grandchildren and self-rewarding feelings when spending time together. Significantly, she noted how her grandparent role had been transformed across the lifecourse of her grandchildren and the lack of negative consequences on her sense of closeness with them.

'And if their mom and dad are going on a night out, er, it's a joy to have them to stay overnight, although they have now passed the age of playing games with me, they have just their computers and they have their own things, you know. So, yes, they don't need me in the same way as they did when they were little, but we're still very close'. (Emma, re-married with two grandchildren)

Rose, a maternal and paternal grandparent of seven grandchildren of two sets (son and daughter), had always had some involvement in the life of their grandchildren either childminding or going on outings, which helped to build a sense of closeness with them. In speaking of the main changes in the life of her grandchildren, all younger than 14 years, she highlighted continuities and changes in the relationships with them. Rose acknowledged some new circumstances in the life of her grandchildren that had severely curtailed the availability to spend time together and doing things together. Despite this, she was adamant that her grandchildren were less reliant on her, and that in fact she felt these changes had had positive effects on the quality of the relationship with her grandchildren. Rose exercised 'emotional reflexivity' (Holmes, 2010) to situate her feelings about the changing grandparenting relationships and to affirm her closeness with the grandchildren amid lifecourse changes.

'Well, now, you see, they [grandchildren] have wider groups of friends now. Also, they are in different things like swimming or dancing, you know. That all takes more time. I don't...it's not the case I feel left out or anything, I just see them growing and developing, and it's good. But, I think I've got quite close contact with them, and... I wouldn't want them on a daily basis, let's face it [laughs]. No, I just think that would be too much. I think what we've got it's nice and easy, and relaxed, relaxed'.

'I think it's a very easy going relationship. I'm quite happy with it. I don't know what to say any more than that. And they're [grandchildren] very relaxed when they come here, they treat as an extension of their own house [laughs]'. (Rose, divorced with seven grandchildren)

The shift in grandchildren's interests and activities and the grandchildren's growing independence from grandparents over time were cited by several interviewee grandparents as the main aspects of the lifecourse changes of grandchildren. Particularly, grandmothers highlighted a vivid contraposition between the past when the grandchildren were largely relying on them, and the present when this dependence had partly worn off. This dynamism in the nature of the relationship between

grandparents and grandchildren was not necessarily felt as a sign of a less sound relationship, but often led to ambivalent feelings that needed some new ways of relating to the grandchild and the exercise of 'emotional reflexivity' to make sense of their emotionalities. For example, a maternal grandmother of two grandchildren, expressed ambivalent feelings arising from the loss of her grandparental role and the growing autonomy of her grandchildren, as well as positive feelings of joy and a sense of continued emotional tie with her grandchildren.

'Although it's sad to see them [grandchildren] not relying on me as much as they did, it's happy because you bring up your children to fly the nest, to be more independent, and so, although the nature of our relationship changes, it's all...not so much for the better, but it's all part of growing up. Then it's different now. They [grandchildren], em, I wouldn't say they use me, but if I can take them to the place they're going to their friends and so on. They've got more independence now, therefore they're not relying on me, which is natural. It's the way things are going, but, er, emotionally we're just as close.' (Emma, re-married with two grandchildren)

Several grandparents felt being redundant in the life of their grandchildren as the grandchild was becoming more independent and struggling to make some sense of the new type of relationship. The case of Anne, for instance, a maternal grandmother of three grandchildren of two sets who had regularly looked after her eldest grandson, aged eleven at the time of the interview, exemplifies the link between emotionalities of grandparent-grandchild relationships and the changing nature of the relationship with grandchildren.

'It was just more...like, more interactive with him [grandchild aged 11], know what I mean? That you thought...you felt needed. Whereas now, you know, like, it's not that kind of relationship. You're not needed, but...although we still have...we're good...communication and all that with each other'. (Anne, in couple with three grandchildren)

For some of the interviewee grandparents, the quality and extent of verbal interactions was a key transformation in the form of relating and spending time with their grandchildren, which substituted for bodily forms of caring and being intimate. Several grandparents emphasised the transformations of dialogical exchanges with their grandchildren into adult-style conversations as grandchildren grew older. This change

in the nature of the relationship has symbolic meaning of the social position of the grandparent and the way intimacy is achieved in everyday life. Thomas and Moira, a couple of maternal grandparents who had always had a regular engagement in the life of their only grandchild, aged 11, noted that the grandchild's growing independence and maturity went hand-in-hand with a new way of relating to the grandchild.

Thomas: *Aye, our relationship with Katie [grandchild] is just the same as what we had with our own kids.*

Moira: *Uh-huh.*

Thomas: *That's how close it is. And then...*

Moira: *And we can sit and have a good conversation with her, and she's good at that as well. No, the relationship is absolutely precious, it's a good relationship we've got.*

Thomas: *But I feel now she's getting that wee bit more independent, and she's getting more, a wee bit more mature. So, you're actually getting a better conversation, whereas before it was, you were trying to encourage her, and things like that.* (Thomas and Moira, in couple with one grandchild)

Dialogical practices were also a means to substitute for shifting physical capabilities of the grandparents. While the literature on grandparenting indicates that physical health of grandparents is a strong indicator of the quality of the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren (e.g. Ferguson et al., 2004), I found some evidence in the interviews that suggested that grandparents with diminished or poor health had a close relationship with their grandchildren. Many were aware of the changing grandparental role and interpreted as a positive change and a new phase to do things differently. For instance, Emma's account shows a strategy through which she had adjusted to her new physical circumstances to sustain a sense of being intimate and attuned to her eldest grandchild. This suggests that grandparents exercise agency they may actively seek to adjust to new relational practices that sustain the sense of being intimate.

'It's too late now, he's [grandson] 13. I can't run as fast as he can now, I can't keep the ball as he does, I can't, you know. So, I can support him and watch him and talk about his football and his judo, but not much to do if it's a physical activity anymore. It's been, and there's nothing to do with our

relationship being any less sound, it's just he's passed that of...playing football with his grannie'. (Emma, re-married with two grandchildren)

Other grandparents also shifted the way of verbally communicating with their grandchildren as they grew older into more adult-style conversations. However, changes in dialogical practices and availability to spend time together are only some of the transformations in the nature of the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren. Embodied intimate exchanges might also be subject to changes and continuities, and play a significant part in sustaining close emotional ties between grandparents and grandchildren. Take the example of Sophia, a maternal grandmother of seven grandchildren of two sets, who drew particular significance of embodied exchanges in sustaining a sense of closeness with her two oldest grandchildren.

'Well...they [grandchildren] are getting older, they'll be twelve. They'll have new friends. They'll be probably doing more, if that's possible. Ehm...at the moment I don't think it's...I think it's probably...maybe speak to them differently because they're getting older, I'm speaking to them more like an adult, you know. They're still eleven, they're still children, ehm...maybe that. But nothing, I don't think that really has changed. Anything...they still want cuddles, they still want, you know, ehm...their kisses, they still want, you know, ehm...they still want the same things. They've always did. I don't think it's changed that much'. (Sophia, in couple with seven grandchildren)

However, there might be changes in the spaces in which *displaying* embodied affection and closeness are carried out as grandchildren became older. Age as a biological structure is meaningful (Morgan, 1996) for members of 'the family' and acts as a cue for ordering bodies and emotional experiences towards others in accordance to a series of beliefs, values and experiences of biologically structured relationships. Age and the ageing process have symbolic meanings attached to structured patterns around childhood and adulthood, with transitional life effects into new age-related identities and emotionalities. In speaking of the changes in her grandchildren's life, Patricia, a maternal grandmother of two grandchildren aged 6 and 10, mentioned that her grandchildren had developed a new division and management of public and private spaces of displaying gestures and bodily touch of love and affection.

'Well, he's [grandchild aged 11] got more interests now and he's got friends that he sees and goes to things with them, and all that. But he's still very affectionate. And he sees me, I don't know... Well, he's quite shy now, he's coming up for 11. He wouldn't like his friends to see him running over giving me a great big kiss, but when he's in the house, when I'm going home, he'll come out and see me then. He'll do things like that'. (Patricia, divorced with two grandchildren)

While Sophia and Patricia are two examples of grandparents who managed to maintain bodily forms of intimacy with their grandchildren, there were other examples of grandparents who mentioned that embodied practices of intimacy came naturally to an end as the grandchild reached a certain age. For instance, Deborah, a paternal grandmother with two grandchildren of one set, spoke of the changes and differences of the physical intimate exchanges with her two grandchildren aged 13 and 11. She suggested the existence of a cycle structured by age in which embodied practices of intimacy such as cuddles and hugs come naturally to an end as part of a new stage in the lifecourse of grandchildren.

I: What about intimacy like cuddling and kisses?

Deborah: *'Leo [grandson aged 13], no. He's thirteen now, he's just getting a wee bit older now. Eric [grandson aged 11], I think he still likes his cuddles. He's only 11, he's just turned 11'. (Deborah, in couple with two grandchildren)*

This suggests that the ageing process is enmeshed into changes in the forms and expression of symbolic and material practicalities of intimate practices. Most grandparents made sense of transformations in the nature of the relationship with their grandchildren on the assumption of a natural process of grandchildren's personal development. The growing independence and autonomy of grandchildren as they grow older (re)shape relational patternings, while new forms of relating stand of for maintaining a sense of closeness. Grandparents may continue a sense of closeness with their grandchildren through verbal or non-verbal practices of intimacy such as talking or cuddles that substitute for diminished social contact and changes in other intimate practices. However, while these practices of love and affection remained important for most grandparents, lifecourse changes in the grandchildren shaped the spaces of doing intimacy or even brought them to an end.

Discontinuities across the lifecourse and emotional distance

The sense of closeness in grandparent-grandchild relationships can also be negatively influenced by changes in the lifecourse of grandparents and grandchildren. The findings from the interviews with grandparents suggest that changes in practices of everyday life over time can bring diminished feelings of closeness between grandparents and grandchildren. Some of the interviewee grandparents felt that emotional distance was growing as grandchildren were spending more time with their friends or developing new interests that precluded grandparents from spending time together, sharing and providing for them. For example, Olivia, a maternal and paternal grandmother whose daughter and two grandchildren lived together in the same house, had had an active involvement in providing care and support to her daughter's children over time and felt close to both of them. Although she acknowledged that her grandchildren were no longer dependent on her, and that was part of a natural development in their lives, she felt that close emotional ties with them had severely diminished as the quality of dialogical exchanges and spending time together was filled with tension and strains.

'As I say, as they grow up, they've got their own set of pals and the only time they come in...and of course Paul [grandchild aged 15] comes in with his grin all over him and I'll say, "what do you want now?", it's usually a problem or something or other he's wanting, you know, but it's the only time he comes. Because, as I say, he's at fifteen, an awkward, we're still waiting for him to grow out the awkwardness, you know, that it's...because Paul and I, and George [grandchild aged 11], we used to be very, very close; but as I say, they've got their own load of friends. Mind you half the time all the friends are in here, you know, it's like a hotel, sleep overs'. (Olivia, widow with four grandchildren)

Practices between grandparents and grandchildren are dynamic and subjected to changes in the personal and familial circumstances of adult children and grandchildren. The literature indicates that needs of childcare and availability of grandparents are highly likely to undergo transformations as grandchildren grow up (Silverstein and Marenco, 2001). Take the example of Chloe, a maternal grandmother of three grandchildren of two of her daughters. She had always felt very close to all her grandchildren, but particularly with the eldest grandchild, aged sixteen at the time of the interview. Chloe mentioned that closeness to her grandchildren had been achieved

through spending time and doing things together. Although she still managed to spend some time together with all the grandchildren, for example organising outings or looking after them overnight, she had recently experienced a severe decline in her involvement in the life of her grandson that came together with less intense emotional ties.

'I don't think I do as much with them [grandchildren] now as I used because as I said, they live further away, er, obviously school, em...in fact, yes, they come over and stay, er, at the weekend everyone and again, not all the time. Adam [grandson] used to come but he's too big to come'.

'There's always been a closeness between Adam [grandson] and I as I said because he was my wee boy, but as years have gone on...you kind of give him up. Well, no, he still gives me a kiss now and again, but you just feel there is a wee bit, you know... '.

Chloe associated age-related changes with a less sound relationship with her grandson as a natural phenomenon in grandparent-grandchild relationships. Chloe's account points to an interesting exercise of emotional *reflexivity* of grandparents in making sense of their emotional position with their grandchildren based on expectations of lifecourse changes in their grandchildren's lives, something that was indicated by Chloe's use of "obviously".

'I'm not as close as I was, obviously, when he [grandchild] was younger, but it's because he's growing up. He's into different things'. (Chloe, in couple with three grandchildren)

Other grandparents also felt that they were becoming emotionally distant from their grandchildren despite continued provision of help and support to them when needed. Age-related changes in the grandchild leading to a growing independence from the grandparents might enter in conflict with the grandparent's preferences in retaining the same grandparenting responsibilities over the grandchildren. Changes in the forms of spending time with and providing for the grandchild might lead to feelings of personal and emotional loss of a special relationship and being attuned to a grandchild. For instance, Anne, a maternal grandmother with three grandchildren of two different sets (both daughters) expressed her sense of loss of a special relationship with her grandson

aged 11 with whom she had experienced significant changes in the nature of the relationship with him over the last few years.

'Well that's what I says to Nicky [daughter] was when I didn't see him [eldest grandchild] as often as I used to, I says to her...I goes, "I feel as if I'm losing him because he's growing up and he's more independent now that he can go out himself and do his own thing". Whereas before, you know, when you were babysitting him and he wasn't going anywhere. So you were the one that was doing all the...you know, taking him to the park and...me and you...no, me and him were doing stuff. And then even if he was playing with a friend or whatever, I had to be there. But now it's, like, he comes in, eats his dinner, he goes out and plays and then comes back in if I'm babysitting. That's the, kind of...you know, the difference of him'. (Anne, in couple with three grandchildren)

What is interesting in this extract is the ambivalent situation in the grandparent-grandchild relationship arising from the tensions and unresolved negotiation between the onus of the grandparent role and the grandchild's growing independence from the grandparent in various activities of daily living. Ambivalences in grandparenting experiences can lead to negative feelings and emotional distance between grandparents and grandchildren. This ambivalent situation was for Anne felt strongly as a result of his eldest son's preference to spend more time with his friends and rejecting the presence of the grandmother.

'No, we [grandmother and eldest grandson] watch TV and we did...you know, we went swimming and we did all that...went to the cinema, 'cause that's how we're at...we like going to them. And it was more contact, you know, going to swing parks and...but now that he's [grandson] older, he's not wanting me hanging about, you know what I mean. He's wanting his friends'.

Despite her grandson's changing preferences and growing personal autonomy, Anne continued valuing the time spent together with her eldest grandson and attaching particular importance to these encounters. She started to reflect on the significance of these moments and activities done together such as swimming, which led to some interesting reflexion of what practices she considered particularly important in building a sense of intimacy with her grandchildren. While one grandson was undertaking sport activities that did not involve the grandparent, she felt that the relationship with her younger grandson was becoming more significant for her. It is

therefore important to note that emotionalities between grandparents and grandchildren can shift over time in either direction for different grandparent-grandchild dyads.

'But I do like the one-on-one, you know, when you do...when you get that time to be just me...like, me and Robin [grandchild aged 8], we're...we'll go swimming. And Martin [eldest grandson], no, Martin wasn't there that day 'cause he was playing rugby. It was just me and... Robin swimming because they were too busy with the...had to look after the younger two [grandchildren]. And I really enjoyed that time with him [Robin]. Just him. You know, we were having a laugh in the swimming pool and it did remind me of, you know, the time I had with Martin. But, no, I would say me and Robin are getting close. More closer now than when he was younger'. (Anne, in couple with three grandchildren)

There are therefore a range of different intimate grandparent-grandchild relationships over time, which might not necessarily lead to an absence of an emotional bond between generations. Ambivalent situations arising from the confrontation between the gradual independence of grandchildren from grandparents and the sense of closeness derived from the grandparent role can lead to feelings of a certain loss of close emotional ties between generations. The lack of new meaningful intimate practices between grandparents and grandchildren that substitute for grandchildren's changing preferences to spend time with their grandparents negatively influence the sense of closeness of the relationship between grandparents and their grandchildren.

Troubled intimacies: divorce and grandparent-grandchild intimate relationship

In the previous chapter I found a shared onus among grandparents to present their family life and family relationships as harmonious and emotionally close. This ideal figuration of family life has been coined by Gillis as 'the families we live by' (Gillis, 1996). However, there typically are dissonances between public pervasive stories about personal life and actual lived experiences (Jamieson, 1998). This ideal form of family is likely to stand at odds with lifecourse events that are likely to transform family relationships such as parental divorce or separation (see review on chapter 1). Divorce or separation in families foreground a complex, multifaceted and dynamic process of reconfigurations of relational patterns in family relationships with varied

consequences in the nature and extent of involvement of grandparents in the life of their grandchildren (e.g. Lussier et al., 2002). Much of the literature on parental separation and grandparenthood indicates that following parental separation maternal grandparents step in to provide practical, material or emotional support, whereas paternal grandparents might lose contact with grandchildren (Dench and Ogg, 2002). Out of the 24 interviews with grandparents, eight of them had a divorced child, of which seven were a daughter and in only one case the interviewed grandparent had a divorced son. This gender bias can be largely explained by the selection process of a follow-up study with grandparents (see details in chapter 4). Data from the interviews with grandparents indicate that grandparent-grandchild relationships are variously influenced by the upheaval of parental divorce or separation, although all maternal grandparents had provided some sort of support following parental separation. Similar to other research that indicates a reduction in the amount of contact of paternal grandparents following parental divorce or separation (Cherlin and Furstenberg, 1992), I also found that in the only case of a paternal grandmother with a divorced son, the contact with her son's children was curtailed. Rose, a maternal and paternal grandmother with seven grandchildren of two different sets had enjoyed a privileged position in terms of contact and relationship with her son's children when he was together with the former partner. As noted elsewhere personal and structural circumstances distort the opportunities to enact and sustain intimate relationships (Jamieson et al., 2006), but in the case of Rose had not led to diminished feelings of closeness with her son's children.

'Because of the situation I think it's quite good how I do see them [son's children]. And when I do it's like picking up from the last time, it's not difficult with them. It's just unfortunate the way that has turned out, but that's it'.

'I'd have seen them [son's children] more often when they were together as a couple. As I said, they only come up every second weekend to their dad's. Whereas Jaqueline's [daughter] are round the corner, it's much easier, you know. That's it'. (Rose, divorced with seven grandchildren)

The reference to her disappointment about the "unfortunate" situation is linked to the loss of contact with her daughter-in-law, which could also explain the significant reduction in the contact with the set of grandchildren. The aspect of the custodial

parent as “gatekeeper” of the grandparent-grandchild relationship is found elsewhere in the literature (May et al., 2012). However, Rose is the only case in the study of a paternal grandparent with a divorced son, which limits the scope and depth of analysis on the effects of divorce in maternal and paternal grandparents. In some other observations, maternal grandparents had intensified the relationship with the divorced daughter and her children by taking them into the house (i.e. cohabitation) or increased the involvement in the life of their grandchildren by providing intensive childcare or even changing houses to move geographically close to the divorced adult child’s residence. This finding resonates with previous studies on the effects of parental divorce on grandparenthood (e.g. Douglas and Ferguson, 2003). However, the literature has paid little attention to relational process that parental divorce triggers between grandparents and grandchildren, that is the significance of family changes on the sense of intimacy between grandparents and their grandchildren. For some grandparents, parental divorce or separation led to a new set of opportunities to relate with the grandchildren, and some of them saw this lifecourse event as the main reason of the close relationship with the grandchild. For example, Moira, a maternal grandparent, reflected on the personal and familial circumstances that had led to a strong emotional connection between her and her divorced daughter’s child.

Moira: *‘I think it's because, I think, personally, it was because she [granddaughter] did stay here for so long. Because she was just...and she slept in the room that we [grandparents] were’.* (Thomas and Moira, in couple with one grandchild)

Another example of the influence of dissolution in the parenting couple on emotional closeness is found in the George’s account, a maternal grandparent whose daughter had been divorced for about 10 years, when the grandchildren were aged approximately 2 and 4.

‘I don't think we'd [grandparents] have been as close to the boys [grandchildren] if she hadn't left Tony [ex-husband]’. (George, in couple with two grandchildren)

Divorce or separation in a family transform family structures and typically brings about changes in the relational patternings between family members and friends (Smart and Neale, 1999), even in ‘post-divorced’ families (Bakker et al., 2015). Data from the interviews with grandparents provide some evidence of changing relational patterns between grandparents and their grandchildren following the divorce of the parental generation. Importantly, divorce can open up opportunities or enable grandparents to enact and maintain a series of everyday life practices through which they build a sense of intimacy with the grandchildren. This finding resonates with other research on grandparenthood signalling the importance of the middle generation as the mediators of the grandparent-grandchild relationship (Johnson, 1998), although the data from the interviews show that this is not exclusively done by the mother of the child. Take the example of Moira, a maternal grandmother whose daughter’s ex-husband was reticent to allow his parents-in-law to have hands-on experience with the child.

‘So the bond has always...it ‘wasn’t there so much at the beginning, because we weren’t allowed to, because her daddy used to, you couldn’t change her nappy, he would do it. That was Gary [ex-husband], he just taken over, even from my daughter, she wasn’t allowed to do all that either. And I think when the two of them split up, the special bond started, really then. And as I say, because she’s been here, and we’ve did so much for them, that she just...it wasn’t like your granddaughter, although it was your granddaughter. It was just another person in our house, just like another kid that you had yourself’. (Moira, in couple with one grandchild)

As noted in previous research parental divorce may strain relationships between adult parents and their children (Smart, 1998). The non-resident father may lose contact with the child or the quality of the father-child relationship may get worse as conflict between the parents mounts over time (Timonen and Doyle, 2012) and might even lead to some fathers breaking down the relationship with their children (e.g. Ferguson et al. 2004). In these circumstances, as shown in some literature on grandfatherhood, grandfathers might step up and act as “surrogate fathers” (Mann and Leeson, 2010) and model intimate fathering. This is the case of George, a maternal grandfather of two grandchildren of his divorced daughter. His daughter’s former husband had rejected to relate with the youngest of his sons, aged 11 at the time of the interview.

'Basically, he [grandchild aged 11] looks on me as a father figure, and just like any child who's getting told off by their father, doesn't like it, you know. You know yourself, when you're younger, if your father told you off - oops - you know'. (George, in couple with two grandchildren)

Grandparents might serve as an important person in the emotional well-being of grandchildren in single-parent households (Ruiz and Silverstein, 2007) or 'compensate' for the emotional loss of an absent father after parental divorce (Doyle et al., 2010). In my data, I found that grandparents reflexively acted upon the relational and emotional circumstances surrounding the grandchild's life as a means to form affectionate ties with grandchildren and emotionally compensate for the lack of an intimate relationship between the father and the grandchild. The examples of George and Thomas are useful in demonstrating the agency of grandfathers to emotionally engage with the grandchildren in a perceived situation of lack of an intimate relationship between the father and the grandchild following parental separation.

'I've felt closer to Josh [grandson] because he wasn't wanted'.

'So, I tried to look after him [grandson, Josh] the best I could. And I tried to give him the love that he would get from his father, that he never got'. (George, in couple with two grandchildren)

George also played an important role in "fixing" tensions in the relationship between her daughter and her eldest grandson, which indicated that grandparents can also act as mediating in the quality of relationship between adult parents and their children.

'Yeah, but I would say we have a great relationship with the children. Luke [grandchild aged 13], especially, I think because he knew more about the split with his mum and dad, because he was older. He had a lot of problems, to start with, and he used to come to me. His mum and him would just argue - I'm going to see my Papa, right, just go and see him. And I would end up being the intermediary, fixing it out'. (George, in couple with two grandchildren)

Thomas and Moira, a couple of maternal grandparents with a divorced daughter, spoke of compensating for the lack of contact and affection that they considered the father should provide to his daughter.

Moira: *'Even yet, to me, he still does play at daddies. He just plays the game. I mean, anybody that says they're that interested in their kid and doesn't speak to them, that's not family. But he wants to play wee happy families. Because all you get out of him now is...I mean, that's her got a stepbrother, we should all be a family. But he's the one that's not making it a family, because he's not speaking to the wean, he's not taking her down, and things like that'.*

Thomas: *'But, I mean, we try to make up for his [grandchild's father] loss, which it is, it is his loss'.* (Thomas and Moira, in couple with one grandchild)

As it was discussed in the previous chapter, grandfathers are not only limited to their role as helpers of their wives when looking after grandchildren or solely in charge of leisure activities disassociated to caring practices and emotional exchanges, but they are likely to have an emotionally close relationship with their grandchildren (Ferguson et al., 2004). Negotiating and maintaining access is a process that is continuously 'worked at' (Morgan 2011) and symbolically linked as a means to endure a sense of 'family unity'. In this study, the interviews with grandparents of divorced children indicate more intricate lived experiences and complex strategies and mechanisms in working at and retaining feelings of closeness with grandchildren, while also experiencing important changes to it. My research is attuned with that of others emphasising the persisting relevant significance of family life after separation or divorce (Gillies, 2003, McCarthy, 2012). Love and cultural understandings of family obligations may be mutually present in shaping the fabric of intimate relationships between grandparents and grandchildren.

Grandparental divorce or separation and intimacy with grandchildren

Much research on the involvement of grandparents and changes in the relationship with their grandchildren following divorce or separation has centred on the shifts in the middle generation and how this effects on the type and frequency of grandparents' involvement with grandchildren (see chapter 1 for a detailed review). However, there is little research on the effects of the grandparental generation on patternings of emotional ties between grandparents and grandchildren. Although one of the research aims of this study set to examine and understand the experiences of grandparents who

are divorced, I found a series of complications in recruiting grandparents to interview with such characteristic. Three main reasons hindered the richness of the data on this particular event for this social group. First, out of the 24 interviews, only four grandparents had ever been divorced. Secondly, the interviewed grandparents were reticent to talk about this experience and disclose how they felt about it. Finally, only one out of the four divorced grandparents had experienced a loss of contact and felt emotionally distant from the grandchildren, although this grandfather had other grandchildren with whom he felt emotionally close. Nonetheless, the data generated in the interviews point to significant relational processes that explain the distinct presence of a subjective sense of closeness between a grandparent and her/his grandchildren.

While previous research has found that the middle generation often acts as the mediator of the grandparent-grandchild contact (e.g. Johnson, 1998), my interviews with grandparents present a more complex picture, in which the gatekeeper role in grandparent-grandchild relationships can also be exercised by grandparents. In line with research on tensions and conflicts following parental divorce (Ferguson et al., 2004), the interview data in my research showed that grandmothers are capable of enacting kin-keeping practices and blocking the participation of their former partner in family relationships. Gender and intergenerational relationship dynamics are important for structuring men's emotional and practical involvement in the life of their grandchildren. Take for example the case of Sam, a divorced grandfather who re-married and adopted his wife's family. He is a maternal, due to his new wife's daughter, and paternal grandparent from his 'original' family with a total of eight grandchildren of four different sets. In his previous marriage he had two sons, both with two children. Following his divorce, the strains with the ex-partner and his sons had increasingly severed resulting in the practical extinction of contact with them and the grandchildren.

'A very dysfunctional family. They just, they live their own life. If I don't phone them they don't phone me'. (Sam)

'Right, so that's the way it is. It's just when I got separated from my wife she sort of like took over'. (Sam, re-married with eight grandchildren)

Sam regarded the first marriage family as a “dysfunctional” family, a sense and qualification of this family based upon the boundaries set by the ex-wife and his son in making contact and thinking of him. In these quotes and in other passages during the interview, Sam spoke of the absence of sentiment of close connection in the relationship with his ‘original’ family, and the contraposition of this situation with his ‘adopted’ family of his new wife.

‘The only time I got a phone call was if there was a problem I had to go down and sort. If I didn’t go down to see my dad in Dumfries, I wouldn’t get a phone call or nothing because they took their mother’s side, I don’t know. But we’re not a close family that way. I’m more closer to my wife’s family than I am with my own, if you see what I mean’. (Sam, re-married with eight grandchildren)

The strains or strangeness in the relationship between former partners in the grandparents’ couple was also mentioned by a maternal grandmother who had been divorced for over a decade as the main reason why her ex-husband was cast aside from the family relationships with his grandchildren. While she acknowledged that the grandfather was willing to be part of the grandchildren’s life, she admitted strong feelings against letting this happen.

‘I told Andrew [grandchild] that, that he did have another grandpa and... I’ve got a soft nature, I’m far too soft generally and I know I am, and sometimes I do feel a bit sorry for that. But then that’s the way it’s got to be. It wouldn’t be a good idea to suddenly say to him, “Do you want to come and see your grandchildren?” He [grandfather] would come’.

‘He [grandfather] would. And I think he would, he would quite like to be involved but really it’s too awkward, I feel awkward about it’. (Patricia, divorced with two grandchildren)

And upon insisting on the restriction to invite the grandfather over to see his grandchildren she reiterated the strangeness of the hypothetical situation. Patricia’s account suggests a division that privileges biological and legal relationships over social relationships. She focused on the negative feelings she would have in encountering and allowing the grandfather to be part of the relationship, and the fact

that there is an unnatural dimension of allowing the divorced grandfather have contact with his grandchildren.

'It's not, it wouldn't be natural and I would feel really awkward. (Patricia)

In these extracts, it is clear that the lack of a close connection between the divorced grandfather and his grandchildren is the result of the poor quality of the relationship between the former partners. However, in other interviews the divorced grandparents had maintained an amicable relationship, which was also related to a continued relationship between both grandparents with the grandchildren, such as the case of Rose who had separated from her husband even before the first grandchild was born.

'Although we're divorced...my husband remarried. We've always remained in friendly terms. We've always met up at family things. And, er, it just sort of happens now he is widowed, he's been nearly two years. But as a result we probably we see him a bit more of each other because he's freer to come and see grandchildren and things'. (Rose, divorced with seven grandchildren)

The case of Emma is also an interesting example of continuities of the relationship despite structural changes in the grandparenting couple. Although Emma had divorced from her ex-husband even before the grandchildren were born, her daughter kept in touch with her father, which made possible that Emma's ex-husband could

'They [grandchild have a link. They phone each other and visit, yes'.

'She still kept in touch and he was a good father to her. He kept in touch with her and he is very fond of Alex and Susie because it is their grandchildren too. He is in Wales, but he is a very devoted grandfather'. (Emma, remarried with two grandchildren)

While much of the literature on grandparenthood has focused on the parental generation as gatekeepers of the relationship between grandchildren, the findings from the data show the relevance of also exploring and understanding the quality of the relationship between divorced grandmothers and grandfathers as a crucial aspect in the bond between them and their grandchildren. However, as I have mentioned at the beginning of this section, I have only presented a very modest body of evidence and

hence further research would be necessary on this topic as it was particularly difficult to interview grandparents who had ever experienced divorce.

Conclusion

The data presented in this chapter run counter to previous research on grandparents' decline of emotional closeness with their grandchildren over time, although some examples signal discontinuities in close emotional ties of grandparent-grandchild relationships. My data is in line with wider literature indicating that the lifecourse events of linked individuals across generations within families modify and shape structural and personal opportunities to participate in each other's life (Elder, 1998) and transform the ways grandparents interact with their grandchildren (Silverstein et al., 2003). Despite the changes in the nature of the relationship, the interviews with grandparents revealed that they were more likely to talk about a sense of continuity in emotional closeness than a gradual decline over time. I found that transformations in practices of intimacy are embedded and are consequence of dynamic forms of *relationality* subjected to preferences, needs and opportunities of family members across generations over time. Also, as shown in the interview data, grandparents exercise agency to adjust to the new set of individual, familial and structural opportunities of their grandchildren, adult children and themselves, and enact new or modified practices to sustain a sense of closeness. Instead of nurturing and giving and sharing practices, grandparents sought to speak to the grandchildren differently. By contrast, some other grandparents found difficulties in substituting old practices for new ones, hence strains in the relationship with grandchildren became notable and negatively influenced the sense of closeness with grandchildren. These grandparents mentioned either a lack of opportunities for spending time together or growing difficulties to enact and sustain significant and meaningful practices such as dialogical exchanges with their grandchildren.

More grandmothers than grandfathers expressed ambivalent feelings about the growing independence of their grandchildren from grandparents and the gradual loss of the grandparent role. Yet, both type of grandparents somehow exercised 'emotional reflexivity' (Holmes, 2010) for interpreting contextually and relationally their own

feelings towards their grandchildren amid changes in the grandparent-grandchild relationship. Changes in the grandparent-grandchild relationship were often perceived as a natural stage in the growing of the grandchildren and with little influence in the sense of closeness of grandparent-grandchild relationships. Biologically structured relationships around age were formed and attached meaning for grandparents in the relationship with their grandchildren. For example, embodied affectionate practices such as hugs and cuddles were expected to naturally come to an end as age identities of grandchildren developed over time. However, ambivalent feelings could also lead to a loss of an emotional connection between grandparents and their grandchildren when unresolved aspects to adjusting to the new grandchildren's preferences and desires.

This research contributes to add further to the understanding of how processes of divorce or separation in the middle generation couple contribute to enacting a sense of closeness in grandparent-grandchild relationships. The findings in this study resonate with previous research on the importance of the quality of the relationship between the middle and oldest generation for the relationship between grandparents and their grandchildren (Mueller and Elder, 2003). However, this chapter offers some evidence to weigh against the mother as kin-keeper and mediator of wider kinship relationships. The parent-as-mediator theory glosses the agency of grandparents to relationally produce emotional ties. It also underplays gendered and intergenerational relationship dynamics that organise and orchestrate opportunities for grandparents to enact and sustain intimacy with their grandchildren. This is particularly evident when fathers act as gatekeepers of wider kinship relationships.

Family re-arrangements following parental divorce or separation have different consequences for maternal and paternal grandparents. Maternal grandparents were more likely to increase support or help to their daughter and grandchild(ren). However, for both types of grandparents parental divorce was a tipping point in the relationship with their children or children-in-law and grandchildren. While the maternal grandparents were called upon to provide help and support to grandchildren and the separated child, a paternal grandmother talked of a decline in the amount of contact with their grandchildren, and particularly the loss of contact with the daughter-in-law. Yet, the notion of a 'matrilineal advantage'(Chan and Elder, 2000) in family

relationships underplays grandfathering through modelling intimate father relationships in the absence of a father-child relationship.

While much research on grandparenthood has studied the different effects of parental divorce or separation on the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren, there has been little interest in the consequences of this life event in the grandparental generation. One of the caveats of this research is the scarcity of cases where the grandparent had ever been divorced or separated. However, the data from the interviews with grandmothers and grandfathers reveal that grandparental divorce is also a significant event that can shape closeness of grandparent-grandchild relationships. Gender influences kin-keeping responsibilities, with grandmothers more experienced in orchestrating wider kinship relationships. As such, intergenerational and gender couple dynamics have consequences in the opportunities of enacting and sustaining grandparent-grandchild close relationships. Strains in the relationship between ex-partners can preclude closeness between grandparents and their grandchildren. Divorced grandfathers might have the relationship with their grandchildren jeopardised by a double-lock of generational and gender relations that shape the opportunities to maintain a close contact with their children and grandchildren. This finding reinforces the importance of considering the whole kinship network when analysing the different relational factors that may enhance or preclude the construction of intimacy in grandparent-grandchild relationships.

Conclusion

The concluding chapter offers an overview of the empirical research, theoretical frameworks and debates discussed in this thesis that have informed the research aims and questions, as well as a summary of the findings of both the secondary data analysis and the interviews with grandparents. In addition, I will offer a reflection on using a mixed methods approach in a field of study with relatively little empirical research and through an analytical lens that has been largely preoccupied with the study of parent-child relationships. I will conclude with some considerations about fruitful areas for future research.

Summary

In chapter 1 I reviewed empirical research literature on grandparenthood examining a series of individual, family and socio-structural factors that influence the presence and prevalence of grandparents in the life of their grandchildren and the emotional closeness between these two generations. I identified gaps in existing knowledge and depicted the contours of my research. In chapter 2 I laid out approaches that formulate explanations on the nature of grandparent-grandchild relationships which aided in interpreting and substantiating the findings. This was followed in chapter 3 with an outline of the main debates on transformations of intimacy in modern societies and the conceptual development of intimacy in the context of family relationships. In chapter 4 I provided my rationale in using a mixed methods research approach and outlined the quantitative and qualitative methods. I provided a detailed overview of the Growing Up in Scotland study as the data set which I used for the secondary data analysis and as a sample frame for targeting grandparents in the follow up study using in-depth interviews.

The following chapters examined and answered the research questions laid out at the beginning of this research. Chapter 5 to 7 dealt with the first three research questions which focused on some individual, familial and structural factors influencing emotional closeness between grandchildren in their early years and four types of

grandparents. In chapters 8 and 9 I tackled the more qualitatively-natured research questions using data collected from the interviews with grandparents living in Scotland. I examined how grandparents make sense of the emotionally close relationship they have with their grandchildren, and the contradictions with lived experiences of grandparenting. I also examined the various practices of everyday life enacted by the grandparents with their grandchildren that are significant in building up a sense of closeness, and the meaning attached to these experiences. In this vein, I examined changes of practices across time and the effects of parental and grandparental divorce in the special quality of the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren.

Summary of findings

The main aim of this research has been to understand what, how and why a sense of emotional closeness is enabled, enacted and sustained in grandparent-grandchild relationships. This thesis adds to the empirical literature on grandparenting, revealing that variability in emotional close relationships between grandchildren and their grandparents is variously enabled by the structure of needs and opportunities for interaction, the frequency of face-to-face contact between generations, as well as through caring and leisure-oriented activities of daily living shared together. Crucially, it has revealed that grandparent-grandchild relationships are enmeshed in complex and relational processes intersected by personal and familial circumstances, as well as gendered and intergenerational relationships dynamics through the lifecourse of various individuals across the generations in families. The research design has combined both quantitative and qualitative approaches. I used a sequential explanatory mixed methods research strategy that initiated with secondary data analysis of the GUS study, a large cohort longitudinal survey of children born in Scotland, and was followed by in-depth interviews with grandparents.

What factors drive a close grandparent- grandchild relationship?

In understanding the patternings of emotionally close relationships between grandchildren and their grandparents, this thesis necessarily draws on more than a

single theoretical approach. The complexity of the effects of material, relational and lifecourse events of emotional ties in family relationships has been examined using the intergenerational solidarity and ambivalence conceptual frameworks and the 'linked lives' principle.

The first research question focused on exploring the effects of the structure of family needs and opportunities for interaction, as well as contact between grandchildren and grandparents, that shape the possibilities of grandparents to participate in the life of grandchildren and enable the development of a close relationship between these two generational groups. The concept of the structure of family needs and opportunities used for the analysis brings together aspects of the intergenerational solidarity model (Bengtson et al., 2002b) and the 'linked lives' principle of the lifecourse approach (Elder, 1998) to understand variations in the patterns of emotional closeness between grandchildren in their early years and their grandparents. The analysis carried out in chapter 5 examined the extent to which factors such as household income, mothers' educational level and employment status, grandparents' geographical proximity of living and grandchild-grandparent frequency of face-to-face contact influenced the mother's perception of an emotionally close relationship between grandchildren and their grandparents. The analysis showed that variations in emotional closeness are largely affected by associational and structural aspects of family life. By contrast, functional needs of support and help of families were weak predictors of an emotionally close relationship between grandchildren and any of the four types of grandparents.

The strong influence of intergenerational face-to-face contact between grandchildren and grandparents on enacting a sense of closeness between generations is in line with the intergenerational solidarity theory that postulates a positive link between affectual and associational solidarity. The results unequivocally pointed to the importance of a regular and intensive close contact between grandchildren in their early years and grandparents to incite a sense of closeness in all the four grandchild-grandparent dyads. However, other individual, familial and structural aspects had no influence or sometimes a negative influence on the child's mother's perception of emotional closeness of grandchild-grandparent relationships. Greater family needs for childcare derived from scarce economic resources or more needs of childcare in households with

more children had lower odds of having an emotionally close relationship than more well-off families. The results in the quantitative data analysis can be better explained by the intergenerational ambivalence model. Drawing on this conceptual framework it is possible to understand how contradictions in family life between family needs and personal preferences can lead to strained relationships and greater difficulties in enacting closeness between grandchildren and grandparents. These ambivalences were, however, observed for some dyads and not others. In addition, the structural aspect of geographical closeness was found to have positive or negative influence according to the grandchild-grandparent dyad. Whereas the two paternal grandparent dyads benefited from living geographically close to the grandchild, the maternal grandfather dyad showed an opposite effect. This suggests wider social and cultural dynamics of gender and lineage underpinning family relationships. It also points to the limitation of adopting the 'matrilineal advantage' conceptualisation of family relationships.

The concept of 'linked lives' adds further in the conceptualisation of intergenerational relationships. The results on the link between more frequent contact and higher odds of an emotionally close grandchild-grandparent relationship cannot obviate the importance of the middle generation in organising and mediating (Johnson 1998) between grandchildren-grandparents relationships. This is particularly the case in children of approximately three years of age, with no autonomy to arrange contact with the grandparents. Hence, the more frequent contact between grandparents and grandchildren needs to be understood through the personal and relational circumstances and relationships between the middle and oldest generation. This suggests a need for a relational understanding in the ways closeness between generations within a family is enabled, and departs from a normative view theorising family obligations and responsibilities shaped by close family relationships. Thus, the analysis of close relationships needs to draw on a three-generational perspective, and how the various opportunities for interaction between generations within families enable grandparents to participate in the life of their grandchildren and construct a close relationship. The findings complement the intergenerational solidarity model, which is solely centred on the opportunities for interaction between two generations rather than the whole kinship network.

The effects of the relationship between the grandchild's mother and a set of grandparents on the opportunities for enabling closeness on the opposite set of grandparents showed some gendered and generational effects. Drawing on the concept of 'linked lives' (Elder, 1998), it is argued that the opportunities and constraints for interaction generated in the intersecting lifecourses of family members across generations influence the opportunities for interaction in other family members. The intergenerational solidarity model provides some indication that postulates that strong ties in structural and associational solidarity dimensions lead to the strengthening of emotional closeness between individuals (Bengtson et al., 2002b). As such, geographical propinquity and intergenerational face-to-face contact in one set of the grandchild's grandparents are more likely to enhance or constrain the opportunities to develop an emotionally close relationship between the grandchild and the opposite set of grandparents. The results showed that the frequency of grandchild-grandparent face-to-face contact between grandchildren and their maternal grandmother influences the opportunities to enable a close relationship between grandchildren and their paternal grandmothers and grandfathers. By contrast, no significant effects on emotional closeness between grandchildren and maternal grandparents were found in case that the grandchild was in little or no contact and lived far from either the paternal grandmother or grandfather. There is a gap in the knowledge of how emotional closeness between grandchildren and grandparents is influenced by the whole kinship network, and the way relationships between the two family lines shape the opportunities for being involved in the life of grandchildren and enacting a close relationship with them. The results in this chapter point to the importance of considering the importance of the whole kinship network in understanding intergenerational relationships, which puts particular emphasis on the 'connectedness' {Smart, 2007 #373} of family relationships and the ways emotional closeness is enacted in everyday life.

Interestingly, the results point to gender and lineage differences in enabling close ties between grandchildren and grandparents, with only maternal grandmothers having a significant influence in enabling or constraining closeness of grandchildren with their paternal grandparents. This result is somehow supported by the 'matrifocal tilt' and 'matrilineal advantage' perspective (Sheehan and Petrovic, 2008, Chan and Elder,

2000b) that gives centrality to mothers and grandmothers in family relationships. However, these perspectives underplay the complex nature of structured relations of gender and family lineage in social life experiences that include caregiving histories (Brown, 2003) and contradictions in family life of grandparents (Connidis, 2015). This points to gendered expectations and inequalities in social relations of gender between generations within a family which may place maternal grandmothers in a more central position in family life affairs than any other grandparent, and which influence the extent to which they are perceived to have an active and affective involvement with their grandchildren, that is they are often the kin-keepers and providers of childcare and support to younger generations (Gray, 2005, Chan and Elder, 2000a). This is particularly more likely to be the case in the early years of the grandchild as childcare demands are often higher than any other time throughout the lifecourse of the grandchild. However, with regards to the effects of gender and lineage on emotional closeness between grandchildren and grandparents, two important aspects are worth noting. First, grandfathers are also emotionally close to grandchildren, and this development of a sense of closeness is similarly influenced by the same structural and associational factors as grandmothers. Secondly, a more relational approach to gender relations can prove to be more accurate in understanding the nuances through which gender and lineage relations affect the grandchild's mother's perception of closeness between family generations.

The second research question, examined in chapter 6, addressed the relationship between emotional closeness between grandchildren and their grandparents and parental and grandparental divorce or separation. The results showed significant asymmetries in the influence of this life transition on the quality of the ties between grandchildren and their grandparents. The centrality of the relationship between the middle and oldest generation in the ties between grandparents and grandchildren has been given in the literature on grandparenting as a strong influence in the event of parental divorce or separation (Mahne and Huxhold, 2012). Drawing on previous research, I expected that parental divorce or separation had positive effects in the emotional relationship between grandchildren and their maternal grandparents, but a negative effect on the chances to develop close ties between grandchildren and their paternal grandparents. These effects of parental divorce and closeness between

grandchildren and grandparents may be interpreted drawing on the ‘matrilineal advantage’ that suggests maternal grandparents, particularly grandmothers, have stronger and more regular ties with daughters compared to paternal grandparents (Cooney and Smith, 1996). In fact, the results of the empirical analysis showed that parental divorce or separation is positively associated with emotional closeness between grandchildren and their maternal grandmothers compared to grandchildren living in intact couple families. As expected, greater needs for support following parental divorce lead mothers to turn to their parents for help (Chan and Elder, 2000a), which altogether situates grandparents, particularly maternal grandmothers, in a better position to enact closeness with their grandchildren. However, there were no statistically significant effects of parental divorce on the mothers’ perception of emotional closeness between grandchildren and their paternal grandparents. This finding is in opposition to the ‘matrilineal advantage’ which would suggest that parental divorce has negative effects on the relationship between grandchildren and their paternal grandparents. The negative effect on emotional closeness between grandchildren and their paternal grandparents following parental divorce was found, however, if the model excluded the variable of face-to-face contact between grandchildren and grandparents. This suggests that grandparents who manage to retain close contact with grandchildren act as a deterrent of negative effects of parental divorce on the relationship between grandchildren and their paternal grandparents. More importantly, it points to the importance of looking at the ways grandparents might sustain a close contact between the middle generation and grandparents in the event of parental divorce to (re)gain access to the grandchild {Timonen, 2012 #721}, rather than assuming that grandparents’ relationship with their grandchildren is simply mediated by the parents of the child acting as gatekeepers of wider family relationships. Thus, the analysis of parental divorce effects on the chances of grandparents to develop closeness with their grandchildren needs to depart from conceptualisations privileging biological line ties as advanced in the ‘matrilineal advantage’, and focus on aspects of relationality and agency of grandparents with other family members across the generations.

The effects of grandparental divorce on the grandchild’s mother’ perception of a close relationship between grandchildren and their grandparents point to strains and tense

relationships in family relationships across the generations. The results showed that emotional closeness between grandchildren and grandparents was negatively influenced by divorce in the oldest generation, except for the grandchild-paternal grandmother dyad. These results run counter to the 'matrilineal advantage' hypothesis; the biological ties of the mother-daughter relationship gloss over the complexity of everyday interactions and the ways grandparents negotiate and adjust their family relationships following divorce or separation, and it is particularly relevant as the models controlled for the frequency of face-to-face contact between grandchildren and their grandparents. The intergenerational ambivalence model is of explanatory value to understand the contradictions between negative feelings of close emotional ties and continued close contact relationships in the event of grandparental divorce and it emphasises the importance of considering lifecourse events such as divorce not only in the middle generation, but also in the oldest generation to understand variations in closeness of grandchild-grandparent relationships.

The third research question examined the extent to which functional and associational solidarity between grandparents and grandchildren explain differences in the mothers' perception of emotional closeness of the grandchild-grandparent relationships. The empirical analysis showed that 'looking after' the grandchildren and 'going on outings' with them were two key grandparenting activities in enhancing the mothers' perception of an emotional close relationship between the grandchild and her/his grandparents regardless of gender or family lineage of grandparents. Overall, the results showed that grandparents who *frequently* looked after the grandchild had higher odds to be perceived by the mother as being emotionally close to the grandchild. Nevertheless, there were some differences between grandparents; the odds of mothers perceiving an emotionally close relationship between grandchildren and grandparents were higher for grandmothers than grandfathers in any of the two lineages if they were frequently looking after the grandchild compared to grandchildren who were never looked after. Similarly, the results showed that the frequency to which grandparents 'go on outings' with the grandchild is positively associated with mothers perceiving an emotionally close relationship between grandchildren and grandparents. Interestingly, grandfathers in any of the two lineages were more likely to be perceived as close to the grandchild if they frequently went on outings with the grandchild

compared to grandmothers. By contrast, the frequency of babysitting had little influence in any of the four grandchild-grandparent dyads. This suggests a certain hierarchy of activities of daily living, in the meaning and significance of these on enacting closeness between grandchildren and grandparents.

The results find some support from the theoretical frameworks discussed here, but also run counter to some theories in the literature on grandparenting. The intergenerational solidarity model suggests that greater strength in any of the dimensions of intergenerational solidarity between generations enhances solidarity in other dimensions. The hypothesis that grandparents engaging more frequently in the life of the grandchild has positive effects on affectual solidarity between these two generations was confirmed by the empirical analysis. In addition, the differences in the odds of being perceived as close in the four grandchild-grandparent dyads seems to adhere to the 'matrifocal' and 'matrilineal advantage' perspective that postulates stronger bonds between grandmothers and the grandchildren. Nonetheless, this was the case for traditionally feminised activities such as looking after the grandchild, which points to cultural framings underpinning family relationships. By contrast, in line with the previous research evidence, grandfathers were more likely to be perceived as emotionally close to the grandchild if they engaged in more traditionally masculine activities such as outdoors activities (Cherlin and Furstenberg, 1985). Hence, this suggests more complex gendered and intergenerational dynamics overlooked in the 'matrilineal advantage' postulate.

The second part of the third research question examined whether the shared activities of daily living protected against lifecourse changes such as divorce or separation in the parental and grandparental generation on the mothers' perception of emotional closeness between grandchildren and grandparents. The results showed that for some grandchild-grandparent dyads sharing activities of daily living between generations was not a protection against possible strains or tensions derived from grandparental divorce. As such, for all the four dyads, except the paternal grandmother one, the grandchild's emotional closeness was lower among grandchildren with divorced grandparents compared to grandchildren with grandparents in intact couple. By contrast, parental divorce had only significant statistical effects for the two grandchild-maternal grandparent dyads. This effect was, nonetheless, positive. These results

underscore the importance of understanding gender and intergenerational relations in the context of grandparenting, particularly the ways grandparents can resolve contradictions emerging from divorce or separation, and the ways this lifecourse event influences the extent to which grandparents have opportunities for interaction with the grandchild that enable a sense of closeness.

Enacting and maintaining intimate grandparent-grandchild relationships

The research aims and questions guiding the course of this research were also focused on understanding the ways grandparents make sense of the intimate relationship with their grandchildren in the everyday life experiences in the context of family life, and how grandparents construct and maintain a sense of being special and attuned to the grandchild across the lifecourse of grandchildren and grandparents. The research also observed how intimate practices are influenced by the event of divorce or separation in the parental and grandparental generations. Notwithstanding norms and practices of grandparenting, the investigation of the processes through which intimacy is built in grandparent-grandchild relationships within the context of family also considered gendered and generational relations that shape the understandings and experiences of intimacy in everyday life.

Emotional commitment with grandchildren and ambivalences in grandparenting

In chapter 8, the discussion in the first section mainly revolved around the significance of norms of grandparenting and family obligations and responsibilities in elucidating the ways grandparents make sense of their intimate relationship with their grandchildren. Some of the interviewee grandparents articulated a discourse of natural and taken-for-granted emotional ties and feelings of love towards their grandchildren as part of the grandparent-grandchild relationship, inscribed within the larger context of 'family' and family life. Importantly, a shared understanding emerged from a sense of heightened emotion towards younger generations in a family that is informed by and shapes family relationships. The narratives of grandmothers and grandfathers about intimate relationships are ingrained in ideas, values and norms of family, and

the moral significance of harmonious, close and loving relationships between generations in a family. However, as shown in the data, grandparenting experiences in family daily practices do not always align with ideals of grandparenthood and family relationships. Altruistic behaviours in intergenerational family relationships suggested in some literature on grandparenthood were not completely corroborated by the data from the interviews. Although grandparents described normative and altruistic reasons as the guiding principle of the relationship with their grandchildren, more complex relational and emotional patterns emerged from the data. The grandparents' narratives suggested the importance of aspects of emotional self-fulfilment derived from the involvement with their grandchildren, combined with normative and altruistic motives. What is interesting is that family norms and obligations are still significant and meaningful in structuring and articulating discourses about intergenerational intimate relationships. The ideal of 'connectivity' in family life is still strong in the personal life of grandmothers and grandfathers in spite of self-rewarding emotional gratification.

The discussion on the importance of family, and the underlying reasons of why grandparents are emotionally close to their grandchildren, lead on to discussion of the ambivalences between norms and lived experiences. The analytical focus was on exploring the ways ambivalence (Connidis and McMullin, 2002) in the social life of grandparents influence emotions and feelings about the relationship with their grandchildren. Largely, grandparents experienced contradictions and tensions between the norms of 'being there' and 'not interfering' (Mason et al., 2007) and personal values and behaviours that contradicted this principle of normative grandparenting. As such, some grandparents referred to ambivalent feelings about unconditional support and childcare to their adult children and grandchildren and their personal preferences and desires. Importantly, contradictions arising from the impossibility of drawing a boundary around family responsibilities led to negative feelings about the relationships with their grandchildren. Grandparents negotiate ambivalence in different ways and with different resources and under distinct relational circumstances. These negotiations are aimed at re-establishing a balance in family relationships, and avoiding damage to the relationships to a stage that would adversely affect contact with the grandchild.

Another interesting finding was a moral understanding of ‘emotional parity’ of grandparents towards all their grandchildren. This shared ethos was primarily used as a strong rhetoric of the idealised notion of family life constituted by, and defined by, harmonious relationships. Nonetheless, the interviews elucidated ambivalence in this norm and the ways grandparents actually feel and emotionally relate to the various grandchildren. Although several grandparents were aware of the emotional onus in the relationship with all their grandchildren, most of them had a favourite grandchild whom they felt closest compared to the others. Interestingly, several grandparents pointed to relational experiences with the grandchild to justify their choice, a special bond forged across the lifecourse of grandchildren through activities of daily living that were significant and meaningful for the grandparent. The emotional asymmetries observed in the interviews with grandparents were also partly a consequence of the better quality of the relationship with the parents of the “favourite” grandchild. This suggests the importance of family relationships across the generations in enabling close emotional ties between grandparents and their grandchildren. Much of the research has downplayed the complexity and diversity of grandparenting life. The often narrow approach of focussing on a single grandparent-grandchild dyad glosses over the relational complexities of grandparents’ life, and often only gives a partial outlook on the life of grandparenting with different grandchildren.

Practices of intimacy

Grandparents attach significance and social meaning to the relationships with their grandchildren in relational processes through practices of everyday life that work at constructing a sense of closeness and being special to the other. I have argued in this thesis that the limits and contours of family relationships are often blurred and subjected to social processes of meaning-making through material and symbolic practices in everyday life that are collectively sanctioned and individually experienced. The study has found that the experiences of grandparenting, and their meaning and significance for a sense of self, are the foundation of forming a sense of closeness between grandparents and grandchildren. This shifts the analytical scope of intergenerational intimate relationships to ways of *doing*, rather than emotional ties ascribed to roles in the social structure.

A relevant finding of this study shows that grandparent-grandchild intimate relationships are part of a complex and dynamic process constituted by multifaceted practices of intimacy. The quality of closeness of grandparent-grandchild relationships is achieved through the materialisation of relationally-contingent practices that are significant for individuals (i.e. grandparents) and symbolically meaningful as a means to signify, materialise and display a deep sense of being intimate and attuned to a 'significant other'. As such, dialogical exchanges were a significant practice for all grandparents. Maintaining regular communication provided the grandparent with a sense of knowing (Jamieson, 1998) about the grandchild (i.e. likes, dislikes, school matters, friends, etc.) and be known by the grandchild. This verbal exchange has been described by commentators of the democratisation thesis as *disclosing of self* (Giddens, 1992), an exchange of deep feelings and inner qualities between equals. However, the data from this research suggests that grandparents value chats and informal conversations about mundane activities of daily living rather than deeply elaborated expressions of feelings.

The interviews with grandparents also revealed that there were other practices of everyday life significant for the grandparents as a way to build a sense of closeness with their grandchildren. Bodily intimacy enacted through cuddles, kisses, holding hands and hugs were particularly important in the ways grandparents could express and convey meanings of love and affection towards their grandchildren, but also as a way of knowing that grandchildren felt secured and trusted the grandparent. Crucially, several grandparents talked about the importance of this bodily contact to be sincere, and not as a formal convention imposed by the parents. Interestingly, the human touch of handling the grandchild such as changing nappies or looking after the grandchild was emphasised by some grandparents as the only way of developing a close emotional tie when the grandchildren were particularly young, i.e. infants or toddlers.

All the afore-mentioned practices can be simultaneous and enmeshed within activities of daily living such as watching television, gardening, playing golf, fishing or supporting the other in any activity. All these practices involved spending time together and doing things together with the grandchild. For many grandparents spending time together was a key aspect through which they built a close connection with the grandchild. Crucially, grandparents mentioned that it was the quality of the

time spent together that made it important, and the aspect that, in fact, set the experience apart as significant and meaningful in constructing intimacy between these two generations.

The data from the interviews also show practices of intimacy are also gendered practices. The data from the interviews revealed some continuities in the masculinities in emotional life and relationships among grandfathers based on gender divisions of labour. The data from the interviews showed continued patterns of gendered relations in grandchildren-grandparents relationships, with typically grandfathers engaging in more leisure-oriented activities rather than nurturing practices. However, there were cases in which the grandfather challenged traditional 'hegemonic masculinities', and engaged in *feminised* forms of emotional engagement with the grandchildren by looking after, babysitting, changing nappies, as well as other bodily forms such as cuddles and hugs. Importantly, some of the grandfathers acted as "surrogate fathers" (Mann and Leeson, 2010) in their interaction with grandchildren that dispute traditional views of grandfathers as emotionally 'detached' if they perceived there was a loss of intimate fathering.

Lifecourse changes and practices of intimacy

Practices of intimacy are far from being static over time. Grandparents mentioned significant changes in the nature and extent of the shared activities of daily living over the lifecourse of grandchildren. This is of particular importance in understanding how grandparents strategically exercise agency and make sense of changes of the relationship with their grandchildren in terms of the quality of the relationship with them. This is illustrated by the ways grandparents adjust to new relational circumstances brought by a growing independence or autonomy of grandchildren from grandparents as they grow older. Some grandparents made sense of the changes of the relationship with the grandchildren as part of a natural process in which the grandchild becomes more independent, but emphasised the continuing strong emotional ties with them. However, some other grandparents had more troubled feelings about these changes, and despite continuities in the way they sensed closeness to the grandchild, they had negative feelings about the growing autonomy of grandchildren from them. The lack of adjustment and contradictions between grandparenting moral

understandings and relationships with grandchildren fuelled discontinuities in the emotional ties in the grandparent-grandchild relationship. This is a key strand in the narratives of grandparents. The growing autonomy of the grandchild is at the centre of new ways of relating between generations, and grandparents adjusting to these new age-identity of the grandchild was particularly important in sustaining a sense of closeness with them. For the vast majority of grandparents as the grandchild grew older they sought to change their way of talking to the grandchild into a more adult-like style of conversation. Also, grandparents talked of important transformations in the bodily practices with grandchildren, but at the same time pointed out the key importance of maintaining cuddles, hugs and kisses as forms of embodying emotions and feelings. However, as some of the grandparents' accounts showed bodily intimacy becomes harder to sustain, and usually is confined to private life, in the sphere of the house, and resented by the grandchildren in the public sphere.

The effects of parental and grandparental divorce on the practices of intimacy and the sense of closeness between grandparents and their grandchildren were also examined. Crucially, the data suggests that the relationship between the mother and the grandparent is key in understanding the strong emotional ties between grandparents and grandchildren following parental divorce. For some grandparents, the divorce of the grandchild's parents opened new opportunities to enact a close relationship with the grandchild, as more help was needed, but also as a result of strained relationships with one of the parents when the couple was intact.

A mixed methods approach for the study of intimacy

In this thesis I have explored patterns, social meanings and processes of intimacy in grandparent-grandchild relationships. The research design decisions were aimed at broadening the understanding of how individuals in families enable, enact and sustain emotional closeness between grandparents and grandchildren in their early years. This thesis used a 'sequential explanatory' mixed methods research strategy (Creswell, 2014) using multiple methods to examine patterns of emotional closeness at a large-scale, and semi-structured interviews to closely examine grandparents' normative understandings and lived experiences of intimacy in everyday life. The findings

obtained through these methods were not to be combined in a strict sense, rather the main aim of the research design was harnessing the strengths of both research methodologies and methods for the study of family intimacy.

This study was cross-sectional and used semi-structured interviews. Sweep 3 of the birth cohort of the GUS study was analysed to examine the extent to which a series of individual, family and socio-structural factors influence a grandchild's mother's perception of emotional closeness between the grandchild and her/his grandparents. A sample of children from the GUS survey was drawn to recruit grandparent participants for the study. Twenty-four sets of grandparents (either sole or in a couple) were interviewed about their experiences of intimacy with their grandchildren. I have noted that a side-by-side comparison, which corresponds to a 'concurrent mixed methods' research strategy, is inadequate for this study. Instead, the 'sequential mixed methods' strategy brought the outcomes of both methods together and discussed their separate contributions in combination to further clarify the processes through which grandparents in families construct an intimate relationship with their grandchildren.

The findings of my study have identified some key aspects in the lives of grandparents, grandchildren and adult children that work at enabling, enacting and sustaining an emotionally close relationship between grandparents and grandchildren and have helped debunking some aspects of intergenerational family relationships. The 'intergenerational solidarity model' is in itself dangerous. Its reference to a normative behaviour ingrained in intergenerational relationships is consistent with discourses about helping and supporting younger generations in need and some aspects of the value and significance of association in families across the generations. Both quantitative and qualitative findings found some ground for the intergenerational solidarity model, particularly in the link between associational and affectual solidarity. The importance of being together and spending time together were found key in enabling and enacting closeness between grandparents and grandchildren. However, this model of intergenerational relationships underplays the mutual coexistence of positive and negative feelings, and structural and relational contradictions between grandparenting norms, behaviours, preferences and desires of grandparents, adult children and grandchildren. It glosses over the complexity of intergenerational

dynamics across generations and individual, familial and structural circumstances. Instead, I argued that the intergenerational relationships are often filled with ambivalences. This perspective of intergenerational relationships helps to make sense in the results of the quantitative analysis signalling lower odds of having an emotionally close relationship among grandchildren living in families with greater economic and temporal needs compared to those who had low needs. Also, the effects of ambivalent situations on a sense of closeness were found in contradictions between the social grandparenting norm of 'being there' and grandchildren's desires of self-autonomy. Thus, the research of intimacy in grandparenting needs to be explored from a perspective that takes into account the relationships across members of the various generations in families, and the meanings and circumstances of these lived experiences within a framework of tensions and contradictions between norms, behaviours, preferences and structures.

The overall pattern of close ties between maternal grandmothers and their grandchildren remains strong, but the assumption of a 'matrilineal advantage' to explain these differences falls short in considering the complexity of intergenerational dynamics that shape different opportunities of contact and involvement between grandparents in the life of their grandchildren. The findings in this thesis point to the relational circumstances of individuals and families in building closeness between grandchildren and grandparents. They also foreground the efforts of maternal grandfathers and paternal grandmothers and grandfathers in keeping contact with their grandchildren as a means to enable and sustain access and a sense of closeness with grandchildren. These efforts are particularly aimed at the parenting couple who in the early years of the child typically act as the sole gatekeepers of the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren.

Investigating intimacy through a lens that emphasises the *agency* of grandparents opens up the possibilities to look into and explore individual preferences of grandparents and how these can enter in contradiction with structural needs of childcare rather than studying grandparenting as mediated by the role of the middle generation. Also, adopting this conceptual approach can help explain tensions arising from strong pressures or needs of childcare and the absence of emotional closeness;

grandparents might have preferences and desires that enter in contradiction with expected norms of grandparenting. The data from the interviews illustrated the ways agency is enacted in daily life by grandmothers and grandfathers in, for example, adjusting to changes over the lifecourse of their grandchildren as a means to sustain close ties with them or make decisions on the extent of the involvement in the life of their grandchildren. The data also foregrounded varied strategies through which grandparents generate opportunities for interaction with grandchildren to soothe a dialogue and acquire some *knowing* of the child such as friends at school, likes and dislikes, etc. The latter illustrates that disclosing information need not involve deep feelings to generate intimacy as suggested by proponents of the democratisation thesis.

Practices of intimacy are the backbones of close ties between grandparents and grandchildren. While the quantitative data showed that practices of caring, namely looking after and babysitting, and leisure (i.e. going on outings) are strong predictors of the mothers' perception of an emotionally close grandchild-grandparent relationship, the interview data helped reveal the meanings associated to these practices such as strong feelings of 'togetherness'. Also, the significance attached to communicating in an open and freely way, cuddles and kisses and spending time together formed part in the processes of developing a sense of being emotionally close to the grandchild in any of shared daily activities between grandparents and grandchildren. All these aspects are mutually supporting in the interaction with grandchildren, which highlights the dynamics and multiple overlapping forms of *doing* intimacy in everyday life. As such, grandparents providing regular care to grandchildren are more likely to communicate with them, construct forms of play and bodily intimacy that would not be possible without this contact. This can be similarly happening in leisure activities such as going on outings, in which the importance of spending time with, talking about school or friends or sharing interests are mutually intersected and occurring, and while not necessarily aimed at enacting intimacy, they contribute to develop a sense of being attuned and special to each other.

The study of contemporary grandfathering is of particular importance as much work on grandparenthood has analysed grandparenting through the prism of grandmothers. Although the results show that grandmothers are overall more emotionally close to grandchildren than grandfathers, maternal and paternal grandfathers were largely

regarded as emotionally close to the grandchild. Also, the results indicated that factors enacting closeness between grandfathers and the study grandchild are similarly influenced by the same factors as grandmothers in either lineage. The lived experiences of grandfathers with their grandchildren through practices of everyday life revealed more complex gendered relations, values and expectations that shape the ways grandmothers and grandfathers interpret and experience intimacy with their grandchildren. Interestingly, the division between caring and leisure practices between grandparents indicated in the quantitative analysis, it was also found in the interviews of grandparents, which illustrates that gender difference in ties between grandparents and grandchildren are still based on gender divisions of labour. As suggested in this thesis, grandfathers enact intimacy with their grandchildren through traditional forms of masculinities such as playing sports together with the grandchildren. However, some of the grandfathers also combined these activities with other more feminised forms of caring, expressing affection and feelings of love. Grandfathers are aware of different forms of doing masculinities in intimate relationships with their grandchildren. Importantly, through the lens of the 'emotionalization of reflexivity' it has been possible to understand how grandfathers create new forms of masculinities that challenge conventional understandings of grandfathers and masculinities as lacking any form of emotional expression of care and affection.

Both research approaches have contributed to shed light on the importance of considering the dynamic of multiple overlapping relationships across and between generations as a means to understand how patternings of emotional closeness between grandparents and their grandchildren are constructed in families. This is particularly noticeable in the event of grandparental and parental divorce when family relationships can become strained. The interviews with grandparents further elucidated the aspect of '*relatedness*' in family relationships, particularly in the event of divorce in either parental or grandparental generation. The results of the quantitative analysis showed positive effects of parental divorce on maternal grandmothers, but negative effects were not found in the paternal grandparent dyads after controlling for intergenerational face-to-face contact between grandchildren and grandparents. The interviews showed that for some maternal grandparents emotional closeness with the grandchild started after the parenting couple dissolution. This finding aligns with research pointing at

mothers heavily relying on their own parents for material and emotional support after couple dissolution, but it showed that maternal grandparents are not in a more favourable position in the relationships with grandchildren if parents are still together. The limited number of paternal grandparents with a divorced son made difficult to corroborate the agency of paternal grandparents to sustain a close tie with grandchildren after the son's divorce. Interestingly, grandparental divorce showed the complexity of intergenerational and couple dynamics in ties between grandparents and grandchildren as grandparents may also act as gatekeepers of wider family relationships. While the quantitative data analysis showed that grandparents' divorce negatively affected grandchild-grandparent closeness, the interview data illustrated the kin-keeping skills and responsibilities of grandmothers in enacting strong emotional ties with their grandchildren and precluding grandfathers to be active in the life of grandchildren.

Limitations and future research

This thesis has answered some important questions on patterns, social meanings and processes of intimacy in grandparent-grandchild relationships. Nonetheless, there are many more questions that have emerged throughout the course of the research process. Although this analysis has brought an insight into patterns of emotional closeness of the relationship between grandchildren and their grandparents, this is only part of a larger research puzzle. Some insight into change over time signals some interesting aspects in grandparent-grandchild relationships, but more research on this is needed. For example, it would be interesting to further the enquiry into aspects such as grandparents' employment status, health condition or the nature of the relationship with parents of the grandchild might modify over time, which is likely to influence the set of opportunities that enable the development of an emotionally close relationship with a grandchild. Importantly, it would be of particular use to have more thorough questions on the quality of the relationship between a mother and each of the child's grandparents. The collection of information on emotional closeness for subsequent sweeps of the birth cohort in the GUS study would have made possible the examination of the dynamics of emotional closeness between the grandchild and her/his grandparents over time. Although sweeps 6 and 7 of the birth cohort of the GUS study

have not collected information on emotional closeness for each of the grandparents of the study child, the collection of this information in future sweeps would allow examination of how emotional closeness develop throughout the lifecourse of grandchildren, parents and grandparents, as their circumstances and experiences take new forms. The data could then be used to explore the extent to which different predictors of variations in emotional closeness are more salient, and whether there are significant differences across gender and lineage of grandparents.

A second limitation of this research refers to the limited number of variables in the GUS study on individual aspects of grandparents, and the different ways they are involved in the life of their grandchildren. For example, the breadth of information on shared practices between grandparents and the grandchild could enrich the understanding of patterns of emotional closeness across gender and lineage lines. Also, richer data on the nature of the relationship between each of the grandchild's grandparents and both the mother and father would allow to explore in more detail the effects of the relationship quality across gender and family lineage of grandparents on grandchild-grandparent closeness. As some evidence suggests, fathers' influence in promoting emotional closeness of the relationship between the child and paternal grandparents needs to be refined (Brown, 2003, Mann, 2007). This could contribute to make stronger inferences of the effects of practices of daily living on emotional closeness of grandchild-grandparent relationships.

Although the research conducted in this thesis has begun to decipher social meanings and processes of intimacy of grandparent-grandchild relationships, more investigation is needed on social experiences of grandparents leading to distant relationships with grandchildren, and how these situations are negotiated and the ways grandparents reflexively make sense and act upon them. Further research on the field of intimacy in families would benefit from interviewing grandchildren in their early teenage years about their sense of closeness with their grandparents, and how these two generational groups co-construct intimate relationships. For example, in chapter 8 I highlighted that grandparents' narratives of 'emotional parity' with their grandchildren foreground normative understandings of grandparenting behaviour. The work of Vanessa May (2008) on mothers' 'moral presentations of self' provide a fruitful framework of

analysis for grandparents' accounts on emotional asymmetries with their grandchildren. This thesis identified the possible contradictions grandparents experience in the distinct feelings towards their grandchildren and norms of 'good grandparenting'. This finding suggests there is need for more attention focussed on ambivalent affective situations. There is little knowledge on how these ambivalences develop over time, and how they are negotiated by grandparents. Importantly, as some evidence from the qualitative analysis suggests, grandchildren become more autonomous from grandparents as they get older, and practices of caring are gradually substituted by other more communicative verbal forms. Nonetheless, more research is needed on how grandparents will continue sustaining a sense of intimacy with their grandchildren, and whether they develop strategies and new practices to sustain closeness, as well as possible emerging tensions and contradictions that unsettle convivial close relationships.

This thesis has begun to explore the different ways masculinities among grandfathers relate to how they understand intimacy with their grandchildren. Future research could examine more closely aspects of gender and lineage across different socio-economic and demographic characteristics of grandfathers, as well as to explore their experiences as fathers, the relationship with their children, and examine how and why they might contribute to reproduce hegemonic masculinities or challenge them. In addition, this thesis has opened a fruitful path of research on how parental and grandparental divorce of either or both maternal and paternal grandparents influences and modifies relationalities and emotionalities in families. Aspects of gender and divorce could be explored to some extent, although there was little information on aspects of lineage, and how this might affect the opportunities to develop a strong emotional tie between grandparents and grandchildren.

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Appendix A

Table A1 Univariate frequencies – Grandchild-grandparent emotional closeness

Variable	Percentage ¹	N
Closeness maternal grandmother		3,746
No	11.4	429
Yes	88.6	3,317
Closeness maternal grandfather		3,221
No	23.4	755
Yes	76.6	2,466
Closeness paternal grandmother		3,113
No	26.8	834
Yes	73.2	2,279
Closeness paternal grandfather		2,643
No	35.9	948
Yes	64.1	1,695

Source: GUS survey – author's own calculations

1: unweighted percentages.

Note: only if child's mother is the respondent.

Table A2 Univariate frequencies – Structure of family needs

Variable	Percentage ¹	N
Age of natural mother at birth of cohort child		4,127
Under 30	43.0	1,773
30 and older	57.0	2,354
Mother's employment status		4,125
Full-time	15.0	619
Part-time	50.8	2,094
Not working	34.2	1,412
Mother's highest educational level		4,113
Degree or equivalent	31.0	1,276
Vocational below degree	38.5	1,582
Higher grade or equivalent	8.0	328
Standard grade or equivalent	15.6	641
No qualification	7.0	286
Number siblings in household		4,127
0	31.6	1,306
1	45.2	1,864
2 or more	23.2	957
Annual equivalised household income		3,865
Bottom Quintile (<£8,410)	19.8	765
2nd Quintile (≥£8,410 < £13,750)	20.4	789
3rd Quintile (≥£13,750 < £21,785)	19.4	748
4th Quintile (≥£21,785 < £33,571)	22.0	851
Top Quintile (≥£33,571)	18.4	712
Mother's divorced or separated		4,127
No	82.8	3,418
Yes	17.2	709

Maternal grandparents divorced or separated		<i>2,990</i>
No	73.8	2,207
Yes	26.2	783
Paternal grandparents divorced or separated		<i>2,703</i>
No	76.6	2,071
Yes	23.4	632

Source: GUS survey – author’s own calculations

1: unweighted percentages.

Note: only if child’s mother is the respondent.

Table A3 Univariate frequencies – Indicators of socio-structural opportunities

Variable	Percentage¹	N
Contact maternal grandmother		<i>3,746</i>
No	11.6	434
Yes	88.4	3,312
Contact maternal grandfather		<i>3,221</i>
No	15.1	485
Yes	84.9	2,736
Contact paternal grandmother		<i>3,113</i>
No	16.8	524
Yes	83.2	2,589
Contact paternal grandfather		<i>2,643</i>
No	20.1	531
Yes	79.9	2,112
Contact Maternal grandparents		<i>3,802</i>
No	10.8	412
Yes	89.2	3,390
Contact Paternal grandparents		<i>3,192</i>
No	17.4	555
Yes	82.6	2,637
Geographical proximity maternal grandmother		<i>3,745</i>
No	27.0	1,013
Yes	73.0	2,732
Geographical proximity maternal grandfather		<i>3,220</i>
No	32.9	1,058
Yes	67.1	2,162
Geographical proximity paternal grandmother		<i>3,112</i>
No	33.6	1,016
Yes	67.4	2,096
Geographical proximity paternal grandfather		<i>2,642</i>
No	35.6	942
Yes	64.4	1,700

Source: GUS survey – author’s own calculations

1: unweighted percentages.

Note: only if child’s mother is the respondent.

Table A4 Univariate frequencies – Shared activities grandchild-grandparent

Variable	Percentage¹	N
Maternal grandmother looking after		<i>3,746</i>
Frequently	59.1	2,213
Rarely	13.1	492
Never	27.8	1,041
Maternal grandfather looking after		<i>3,221</i>
Frequently	52.2	1,681
Rarely	11.7	377
Never	36.1	1,163
Paternal grandmother looking after		<i>3,111</i>
Frequently	39.7	1,234
Rarely	17.9	557
Never	42.4	1,320
Paternal grandfather looking after		<i>2,642</i>
Frequently	37.1	980
Rarely	15.7	415
Never	47.2	1,297
Maternal grandmother babysitting		<i>3,746</i>
Frequently	32.4	1,214
Rarely	31.8	1,191
Never	35.8	1,341
Maternal grandfather babysitting		<i>3,221</i>
Frequently	28.2	908
Rarely	28.5	917
Never	43.3	1,396
Paternal grandmother babysitting		<i>3,111</i>
Frequently	19.9	619
Rarely	30.4	945
Never	49.7	1,547
Paternal grandfather babysitting		<i>2,642</i>
Frequently	18.2	480
Rarely	27.5	727
Never	54.3	1,435
Maternal grandmother overnight		<i>3,697</i>
Frequently	20.9	773
Rarely	28.3	1,046
Never	50.8	1,878
Maternal grandfather overnight		<i>3,019</i>
Frequently	19.3	583
Rarely	26.6	802
Never	54.2	1,634
Paternal grandmother overnight		<i>3,096</i>

Frequently	11.8	364
Rarely	23.1	715
Never	65.1	2,017
Paternal grandfather overnight		2,630
Frequently	10.8	285
Rarely	21.6	568
Never	67.6	1,777
Maternal grandmother outings		3,746
Frequently	33.9	1,270
Rarely	24.7	926
Never	41.4	1,550
Maternal grandfather outings		3,221
Frequently	30.8	992
Rarely	22.9	736
Never	46.4	1,493
Paternal grandmother outings		3,111
Frequently	20.3	631
Rarely	22.0	685
Never	57.7	1,795
Paternal grandfather outings		2,642
Frequently	19.1	506
Rarely	21.4	564
Never	59.5	1,572

Source: GUS survey – author’s own calculations

1: unweighted percentages.

Note: only if child’s mother is the respondent.

GRANDPARENT STUDY

If you are happy for the Researcher to contact your child's grandparents, please complete this form and return it to Eloi Ribe, using the pre-paid envelope enclosed in this letter or by emailing it to e.ribe@sms.ed.ac.uk.

☐

I have spoken to the grandparent concerned and he/she is happy to be contacted with more information about the interview

☐

I also allow the researcher, Eloi Ribe, to have the details of some of my previous responses at GUS interviews. Specifically on: frequency of contact between my child and his/her grandparents and any activities they do together, number of grandparents alive, age of grandparents, closeness to grandparents and geographical proximity of my child to his/her grandparents. Also, data about my age at child's birth (provided as a range, e.g. 20 to 29), whether I live with a spouse or partner, my household income (provided as a range - e.g. £10,000 – £15,000 - only) and if applicable, child's frequency of contact and seeing with the child's non-resident parent and the quality of the relationship.

Name (PRINT).....

Signature.....

Date.....

Contact details of grandparent:

Name (PRINT).....

Address.....

.....

Telephone number:

Email address:

Thank you very much for your help

Appendix C

Information letter

May 2015

Dear

Growing Up In Scotland: Grandparenting in Scotland

As you know, Growing Up in Scotland is an on-going study about your child's life, and we are thankful you are part of it. Today, I am writing to you about a small follow-up project looking at the role of grandparents in children's lives. This project is being carried out by Eloi Ribe, a researcher at the University of Edinburgh. It will use Growing up in Scotland data but the researcher is also interested in talking directly **to your child's grandparents**. The project looks at the relationship between grandparents and their grandchildren.

I am writing to ask if you would be willing to discuss the research with your child's <INSERT WHICH GRANDPARENT(S)> and find out if <he/she/their> is happy to be contacted about being interviewed. If the grandparent is interested, please complete the enclosed form and return it to Eloi in the stamped address envelope provided. By doing so, you are not committing your child's grandparent to doing an interview. Eloi will contact him/her directly to provide more information about the project and what the interview involves (more information enclosed).

If we do not receive a form from you, someone on behalf of ScotCen may be in touch to speak to you some more the study. Participation is of course voluntary, so if you would prefer **not** to be contacted about this particular project, please contact me by phone on 0131 240 0210 or via email at lesley.birse@scotcen.org.uk by 21st April 2015. In this case, your details will be removed and you will not be contacted further about this.

Thank you for your help and please do not hesitate to contact me if there is anything you would like to discuss. We have also provided more information on this project overleaf.

Yours sincerely,

Lesley Birse

Research Resources Manager

What is Grandparenting in Scotland about?

This project is being carried out by Eloi Ribe, a PhD student at the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships at the University of Edinburgh. The project looks at the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren, and in particular, how grandparents are involved in the lives of their grandchildren as they grow up.

Why are you contacting me?

We are contacting you because you take part in the Growing up in Scotland study. You may recall that you previously answered questions about your child and his/her contact with his/her grandparents. This research project is about finding out more, from the child's grandparent, about this relationship.

What do you want me to do?

We are asking if you would be happy to ask your child's paternal/maternal grandparents if they are willing to be contacted about taking part in an interview. We will only do this with your permission and, of course, if the child's grandparent would like to take part.

What happens next?

If the child's grandparent is happy to be contacted about this project, please complete the enclosed form and return it to Eloi Ribe in the stamped address envelope. In these cases, Eloi will contact the child's grandparent directly to provide more details about the project and arrange a convenient time and location for the interview. The interview would take around 1 hour. **By returning the form, you are not committing the child's grandparent to take part in an interview.**

Link to GUS data

We would also like your permission to provide Eloi with information you've previously given during your Growing up in Scotland interviews. This will allow him to compare his findings with those from the wider study. The specific data Eloi is interested in is limited to answers to questions on the frequency of contact between your child and his/her grandparents and any activities they do together, number of grandparents alive, age of grandparents, closeness to grandparents and proximity of child to his/her grandparents. Also, the data about your age at child's birth (provided as a range), whether you live with a spouse or partner, your household income (provided as a range), and if applicable, child's frequency of contact and seeing with the child's non-resident parent and the quality of the relationship. We will only provide this information if you give us your permission to do so. There is a box on the form to say whether or not you allow this to happen. **This information will not be disclosed to the child's grandparents or anyone else.**

What happens to the information we provide?

All the data about you, your child and the child's grandparents will be handled securely and in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). This information will not be

disclosed to a third party and all personal information will be kept separately from the data collected during the interviews. You or your family will never be named.

What happens if I don't return the form?

If you do not return the form, Eloi Ribe may get in touch with you to talk to you some more about the project.

I'm not interested/The child's grandparent is not interested

That's fine. Participation is completely voluntary. If you do not want to be contacted about this project, please get in touch with us either by phone (0131 240 0210) or email lesley.birse@scotcen.org.uk. In this case, your details will be removed and you will not be contacted further about this

Further questions

If you would like to speak directly to the Researcher, Eloi Ribe, about this project he can be contacted by phone 07598928311 or email e.ribe@sms.ed.ac.uk. If you would like to talk to someone at ScotCen Social Research (organisation that runs Growing up in Scotland) please contact Lesley Birse on 0131 240 0210 or email Lesley.birse@scotcen.org.uk.

Appendix D

Research ethics form

University of Edinburgh

School of Social and Political Studies

RESEARCH AND RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Ethical review form for level 2 and level 3 auditing



This form should be used for any research projects carried out under the auspices of SSPS that have been identified by self-audit as requiring detailed assessment - i.e. level 2 and level 3 projects (see <http://www.sps.ed.ac.uk/research/ethics>). This form provides general School-wide provisions. Proposers should feel free to supplement these with detailed provisions that may be stipulated by research collaborators (e.g. NHS) or professional bodies (e.g. BSA, SRA). The signed and completed form should be submitted, along with a copy of the research proposal (or a description of the research goals and methodology where this is unavailable) to the relevant person:

- For staff applying for external funding, the PI should submit the form to Research Office
- For Postdoctoral Fellows, the Mentor should submit the form to Research Office
- For PG Research (PhD or MSc by Research), the Supervisor should submit the form to Director of the Graduate School.
- For UG Dissertations, the Supervisor should submit the form to the Programme/Dissertation Convenor.

Research and Research Ethics Committee will monitor level 2 proposals to satisfy themselves that the School Ethics Policy and Procedures are being complied with. They will revert to proposers in cases where there may be particular concerns of queries. For level 3 audits, work should not proceed until Research and Research Ethics Committee (or the Director of Graduate Studies, in the case of postdoctoral research) has considered the issues raised. Level 3 applications should be submitted well in advance of a required date of approval.

Research Office may monitor the implementation of arrangements for dealing with ethical issues through the lifetime of research projects. Please ensure you keep a record of how you are addressing ethics issues in the course of your research (e.g. consent forms, disclosure processes, storage of data, discussion of ethical issues by project advisory board). Do contact the Research Administrator if any unanticipated ethics issues arise in the course of your research/after the completion of your project.

SECTION 1: PROJECT DETAILS

- 1.1 Title of Project
'Significant and meaningful grandparenting practices in Scotland'
- 1.2 Principal Investigator, and any Co-Investigator(s) (Please provide details of Name, Institution, Email and Telephone)

Eloi Ribe
Centre for Research on Families and Relationships at the University of
Edinburgh

1.4 Does the sponsor require formal prior ethical review?

YES ☐ NO ☒

If yes, by what date is a response required

1.5 Does the project require the approval of any other institution and/or ethics committee?

YES

NO

☒

If YES, give details and indicate the status of the application at each other institution or ethics committee (i.e. submitted, approved, deferred, rejected).

The application has been submitted to ScotCen, which is currently reviewing the proposal and, therefore, it is pending for approval.

1.6 This project has been assessed using this checklist and is judged to be LEVEL2 ☒ (for information to Research Ethics Committee) ☐

LEVEL 3 ☐ (for discussion by Research Ethics Committee)

1.7 If Level 3, is there a date by which a response from the committee is required?

Name..... Signature.....

PLEASE ATTACH A COPY OF THE RESEARCH PROPOSAL (OR ALTERNATIVELY A DESCRIPTION OF THE RESEARCH)

SECTION 2: POTENTIAL RISKS TO PARTICIPANTS

2.1 Is it likely that the research will induce any psychological stress or discomfort?

YES ☐ ☐

NO

☒

If YES, state the nature of the risk and what measures will be taken to deal with such problems.

2.2 Does the research require any physically invasive or potentially physically harmful procedures? YES ☐ ☐ NO

☒

If YES, give details and outline procedures to be put in place to deal with potential problems.

2.3 Does the research involve sensitive topics, such as participants' sexual behaviour, illegal activities, their experience of violence, their abuse or exploitation, their mental health, or their ethnic status?

YES ☐ ☐

NO

☒

If YES, give details.

2.4 Is it likely that this research will lead to the disclosure of information about child abuse or neglect or other information that would require the researchers to breach confidentiality conditions agreed with participants?

YES ☐ ☒ NO

☐

If YES, indicate the likelihood of such disclosure and your proposed response to this.

- It is very unlikely that issues of child abuse or neglect transpire in any of the interviews. It is acknowledged, however, that there might be cases in which these issues are spontaneously expressed during the course of the interview as a potential concern from the interviewee. In the event this happens the researcher, Eloi Ribe, will contact relevant people to seek advice and support and agree on the next steps which could potentially but not definitely lead to breaching confidentiality.

If there is a real risk of such disclosure triggering an obligation to make a report to Police, Social Work or other authorities, a warning to this effect must be included in the Information and Consent documents.

- 2.5 Is it likely that the research findings could be used in a way that would adversely affect participants or particular groups of people?

YES ☐ ☐ NO

☒

If YES, describe the potential risk for participants of this use of the data. Outline any steps that will be taken to protect participants.

- 2.6 Is it likely that participation in this research could adversely affect participants in any other way?

YES ☐ ☐ NO

☒

If YES, give details and outline procedures to be put in place to deal with such problems.

- 2.7 Is this research expected to benefit the participants, directly or indirectly?

YES ☐ ☐ NO

☒

If YES, give details.

- 2.8 Will the true purpose of the research be concealed from the participants?

YES ☐ ☐ NO

☒

If YES, explain what information will be concealed and why. Will participants be debriefed at the conclusion of the study? If not, why not?

SECTION 3: POTENTIAL RISKS TO THE RESEARCHER/S

- 3.1 Is the research likely to involve any psychological or physical risks to the researcher, and/or research assistants), including those recruited locally?

YES ☐ ☐ NO ☒

If Yes, explain what measures will be taken to ensure adequate protection/support.

SECTION 4: PARTICIPANTS

- 4.1 How many participants is it hoped to include in the research?

- About 60 participants

4.2 What criteria will be used in deciding on the inclusion and exclusion of participants in the study?

- Inclusion criteria are the following:
 - Growing Up in Scotland study child's maternal and paternal grandparents
 - Grandparents who are deemed by the mother to be close or very close to the study child
 - Grandparents living within 20-30 minute drive from the study child
- Exclusion criteria are the following:
 - Severely physically and/or mentally impaired grandparents
 - Individuals who do not speak English

4.3 Are any of the participants likely to:

be under 18 years of age? YES ☐ NO ☒

be looked after children (including those living in local authority care or those living at home with a legal supervision requirement)? YES ☐ NO ☒

be physically or mentally ill? YES ☒ NO ☐

have a disability? YES ☒ NO ☐

be members of a vulnerable or stigmatized minority? YES ☐ NO ☒

be unlikely to be proficient in English? YES ☐ NO ☒

be in a client or professional relationship with the researchers? YES ☐ NO ☒

be in a student-teacher relationship with the researchers? YES ☐ NO ☒

be in any other dependent relationship with the researchers? YES ☐ NO ☒

have difficulty in reading and/or comprehending any printed material distributed as part of the research process? YES ☐ NO ☒

be vulnerable in other ways? YES ☐ NO ☒

If YES to any of the above, explain and describe the measures that will be used to protect and/or inform participants.

- The present research project will interview grandparents of various ages. It is expected that the age range of participants will be between 40 and 95 years. Although the research project does not target individuals with physical/mental illnesses or disabilities, on occasions some participants might have a mild physical or mental impairment.
- I will not interview any individual who is severely physically or mentally ill.
- It is likely that participants in this research have one or more disabilities as the study involves old people. All participants are offered to conduct the interview in their home, which would prevent individuals with a physical disability to move outside the house and, therefore, avoid any discomfort. The researcher will make sure all participants have clearly understood that participation in the study is voluntary and withdrawal from it can happen at any time. If the researcher detects that any of the participants have difficulties of any kind to follow and participate in the study, no further action will take place and the participant will be notified that his/her involvement is no longer required.

Do the researchers need to be cleared through the Disclosure (Protecting Vulnerable Groups) Scheme? See http://www.disclosurescotland.co.uk/pvg/pvg_index.html

YES ☐ NO ☒

Will it be difficult to ascertain whether participants are vulnerable in any of the ways listed above (e.g. where participants are recruited via the internet)?

YES ☐ NO ☒

If YES, what measures will be used to verify the identity of participants, or protect vulnerable participants?

4.4 How will the sample be recruited?

This study requires a two-step recruitment process. First, GUS participants will be contacted to obtain details of the study child's grandparents. ScotCen will first send a letter to previously selected (only via the identification number) GUS participants. The letter provides details of the type and nature of the study and the purpose of it. It contains information about me and provides my contact details. More crucially, the letter clearly states that participation in the study is entirely voluntary and that the study's participant can withdraw from it at any time. It also encourages talking about the research with the study child's grandparents (a pack including the information leaflet and an opt-in form will be provided). The selected system to recruit GUS participants is an opt-out system, which will also be clearly stated in the invitation letter. ScotCen will pass on the details of those GUS participants who have not opted-out to the researcher. The researcher will then be able to contact GUS participants to provide further information and obtain grandparents' contact details.

The second step of the recruitment process involves the study child's grandparents. GUS participants will be sent an information leaflet, opt-in form and consent form to pass onto the study child's grandparents. Also, if these are not passed on but the GUS participant provides the study child's grandparents' contact details to the researcher of the study, these documents will be directly sent to the grandparents. Grandparents' participation will be obtained using an opt-in system. Interviews will be only arranged with those who opt-in to the study.

4.5 Will participants receive any financial or other material benefits because of participation?

YES ☐ NO ☒

If YES, what benefits will be offered to participants and why?

- In the event of a low response for participating in the study, a small reward of about maximum £10 will be offered to participants to encourage their involvement in the present study.

Before completing Sections 5 & 6 please refer to the University Data Protection Policy to ensure that the relevant conditions relating to the processing of personal data under Schedule 2 and Schedule 3 are satisfied. Details are Available at:

www.recordsmanagement.ed.ac.uk

SECTION 5: CONFIDENTIALITY AND HANDLING OF DATA

5.1 Will the research require the collection of personal information from e.g. universities, schools, employers, or other agencies about individuals without their direct consent?

YES ☐ NO ☒

If YES, state what information will be sought and why written consent for access to this information will not be obtained from the participants themselves.

- 5.2 Does the research involve the collection of sensitive data (including visual images of respondents) through the internet? YES ☐ NO ☒

If YES, describe measures taken to ensure written consent for access to this information.

- 5.3 Will any part of the research involving participants be audio/film/video taped or recorded using any other electronic medium? YES ☒ NO ☐

If YES, what medium is to be used and how will the recordings be used?

The interview will be audio-recorded. The audio recording of the interview and the electronically type transcript will be stored on a password protected computer. Once I finish writing up my PhD thesis (no more than 3 years) audio recordings will be destroyed. The transcript of the interview will be archived in an anonymised form for use in future research.

- 5.4 Who will have access to the raw data?

- The Principal Investigator, Eloi Ribe, will be the only person who will have access to the raw data.
- Transcripts of the interviews will be anonymised for further use in the present and future research, as well as open to other individuals and research institutions for research purposes.

- 5.5 Will participants be identifiable, including through internet searches? YES ☐ NO ☒

If YES, how will their consent to quotations/identifications be sought?

- 5.6 If not, how will anonymity be preserved?

- 5.7 Will the datafiles/audio/video tapes, etc. be disposed of after the study? YES ☒ NO ☐

- 5.8 How long they will be retained?

- Audio recordings will be deleted after the completion of the present study (maximum 3 years).

- 5.9 How will they eventually be disposed of?

- Complete deletion of the audio files kept in a password-protected computer.

- 5.10 How do you intend for the results of the research to be used?

- 5.11 Will feedback of findings be given to participants? YES ☒ NO ☐

If YES, how and when will this feedback be provided?

- The researcher will send a copy of the summary of the results to all participants once the study has been completed.

SECTION 6: PARTICIPANT INFORMATION AND CONSENT

6.1 Will written consent be obtained from participants?

YES ☒ NO

☐

If YES, attach a copy of the information sheet and consent forms.

In some contexts of ethnographic research, written consent may not be obtainable or may not be meaningful. If written consent will NOT be obtained, please explain why circumstances make obtaining consent problematic.

Administrative consent may be deemed sufficient:

- a) for studies where the data collection involves aggregated (not individual) statistical information and where the collection of data presents:
 - (i) no invasion of privacy;
 - (ii) no potential social or emotional risks:
- b) for studies which focus on the development and evaluation of curriculum materials, resources, guidelines, test items, or programme evaluations rather than the study, observation, and evaluation of individuals.

6.2 Will administrative consent be obtained in lieu of participants' consent?

YES ☐

NO ☒

If YES, explain why individual consent is not considered necessary.

In the case of research in online spaces or using online technology to access participants, will consent be obtained from participants?

If YES, explain how this consent will be obtained.

If NO, give reasons.

6.3 In the case of children under 16 participating in the research on an individual basis, will the consent or assent of parents be obtained?

YES ☐ NO ☐

If YES, explain how this consent or assent will be obtained.

If NO, give reasons.

6.4 Will the consent or assent (at least verbal) of children under 16 participating in the research on an individual basis be obtained?

YES ☐ NO ☐

If YES, explain how this consent or assent will be obtained.

If NO, give reasons.

6.5 In the case of participants whose first language is not English, will arrangements be made to ensure informed consent?

YES ☐ NO ☒

If YES, what arrangements will be made?

If NO, give reasons.

- Interviews will be only conducted with participants whose English is proficient.

6.6 In the case of participants with disabilities (e.g. learning difficulties or mental health problems), will arrangements be made to ensure informed consent?

YES ☐ ☐ NO ☒

If YES, what arrangements will be made?

If NO, give reasons.

- No interviews will be conducted with individuals who have learning difficulties or mental health problems.

6.7 Many funders encourage making datasets available for use by other researchers. Will the data collected in this research be made available for secondary use?

YES ☐ ☒ NO ☐

If YES, what arrangements are in place to ensure the consent of participants to secondary use?

- This is explicitly explained and stated in the information leaflet and the consent form. The researcher will verify prior to the commencement of the interview that the interviewee has correctly understood it and agrees with it.

SECTION 7: Unplanned/unforeseen problems

7.1 Is the research likely to encounter any significant ethical risks that cannot be planned for at this stage?

YES ☐ ☐

NO ☒

If YES, please indicate what arrangements are being made to address these as they arise in the course of the project.

SECTION 8: CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The University has a 'Policy on the Conflict of Interest', which states that a conflict of interest would arise in cases where an employee of the University might be "compromising research objectivity or independence in return for financial or non-financial benefit for him/herself or for a relative or friend." See:

http://www.docs.csg.ed.ac.uk/HumanResources/Policy/Conflict_of_Interest.pdf

Conflict of interest may also include cases where the source of funding raises ethical issues, either because of concerns about the moral standing or activities of the funder, or concerns about the funder's motivation for commissioning the research and the uses to which the research might be put.

The University policy states that the responsibility for avoiding a conflict of interest, in the first instance, lies with the individual, but that potential conflicts of interest should always be disclosed, normally to the line manager or Head of Department. Failure to disclose a conflict of interest or to cease involvement until the conflict has been resolved may result in disciplinary action and in serious cases could result in dismissal.

8.1 Does your research involve a conflict of interest as outlined above

YES ☐ ☐ NO ☒

If YES, give details.

Appendix E

Table E1 Socio-demographics of interviewees and their families⁶

Type interview	Family type	Grandparent type	Name Grandparent 1	Name Grandparent 2	Number of daughters	Number of sons	Number of grandchildren	Age range of grandchildren	Adult child divorced or separated
Both grandparents	Couple	Maternal	Thomas	Moira	1	2 (no children)	1	11	Daughter
Grandfather	Couple	Maternal	George	-	1	0	2	11 - 13	Daughter
Both grandparents	Couple	Paternal	Katherine	Adam	0	2	4	4 - 11	No
Grandmother	Divorced	Maternal	Patricia	-	1	1 (no children)	2	6 - 10	No
Grandmother	Couple	Maternal	Anne	-	2	0	3	1 - 11	Daughter
Grandmother	Widow	Paternal	Caroline	-	0	3	5	8 - 25	No
Grandmother	Widow	Maternal and paternal	Olivia	-	1	1	4	11 – 15	Daughter
Grandfather	Re-married	Maternal and paternal	Sam	-	3	4	8	2 – 11	No
Grandfather	Widow	Maternal and paternal	Frederick	-	1	1	4	11 - 23	Daughter
Both grandparents	Couple	Paternal	Hugh	Samantha	2 (no children)	1	2	6 - 10	No
Grandmother	Couple	Maternal	Sophia	Ross	2	1 (no children)	7	3 – 11	No

⁶ All names have been changed by the researcher to protect the anonymity of the participants.

Both grandparents	Couple	Paternal	Deborah	Alan	0	2	2	10 - 13	No
Grandmother	Couple	Maternal and paternal	Eleanor	-	1	2	3	1 - 11	Daughter
Grandmother	Widow	Maternal and paternal	Margaret	-	1	1	5	6 - 13	No
Both grandparents	Couple	Paternal	Martha	Rob	0	2	2	11 - 19	No
Both grandparents	Couple	Maternal and paternal	Tom	Lucy	1	1	4	7 - 20	No
Grandmother	Re-married	Maternal	Emma	-	1	1 (no children)	2	11 - 13	No
Grandmother	Couple	Maternal	Chloe	-	3	0	3	11 - 16	Daughter
Grandfather	Couple	Paternal	Keith	-	0	2	3	10 - 12	No
Grandfather	Widow	Maternal	Paul	-	2	0	1	11	No
Grandmother	Divorced	Maternal and paternal	Rose	-	1	1	7	< 14	Son
Grandmother	Couple	Maternal and paternal	Heather	-	2	1	3	10 - 23	Daughter
Grandmohter	Couple	Paternal	Rhona	David	0	4	7	4 - 13	No
Both grandparents	Couple	Paternal	Orla	Mark	0	2	2	8 - 11	No

Appendix F

Interview guide Grandparents

Objectives

- a) To explore the dynamics of family life
- b) To understand the links between family practices and closeness with grandchild
- c) To determine the factors that create a close and meaningful relationship between grandparents and grandchildren across time
- d) To examine differences of grandparents' practices, attitudes and behaviours by lineage and gender across their lifecourse
- e) To understand differences and similarities between couple and divorced/separated families

Introduction

I am a PhD student at the University of Edinburgh. My project in collaboration with the Centre for Research on Families and Relationships and ScotCen has a particular interest in the lives of individuals in the family. More particularly, the project explores the grandparent-grandchild relationships. This project aims to understand these relationships and inform the Scottish government about family life and childcare needs, fostering changes for ensuring a better life for children and adults.

Introducing questions

I would like to first ask you a few general questions about yourself and your child(ren) and grandchildren. I would like to remind you that you are not obliged to answer any of the questions and can withdraw from the study at any point.

- i) Your name will be changed in the transcripts, but for now, how would you like me to refer to you?
- ii) First of all, I'd like to ask you where and when were you born?
- iii) Have you always lived in the same place?
 - a. **IF NO:** Where did you live before?
- iv) Who do you live with at the moment?
 - a. How long have you been living with this/these people?
- v) I'd like to briefly ask you about your history being in a couple:
 - a. Please, could you tell me about your partner:
 - i. What is his/her name?
 - ii. What is his/her age?
 - b. When did you get together?
 - i. Are you married? Civil partnership?
 - c. Have you always lived in the same house after getting together?
 - d. **In case change of houses:** do you remember the reason why you changed houses?

- vi) I'd like to briefly ask you about your **job history**. Have you ever had a paid job?
IF NO proceed to VIII
- vii) Are you still working?
IF YES:
- a. How long have you been working?
 - b. What type of work do you do?
 - c. Have you always worked in the same job?
 - d. If NO: do you remember any particular reason why you changed jobs?
 - e. Do you work full or part-time?
 - i. Have you always worked either full-time or part-time?
 - ii. Was there any particular reason you can remember for this change of working hours?
 - iii. When was that?
- IF NO:**
- a. How many years did you work?
 - b. What type of work did you do?
 - c. When did you stop working?
 - a. What age were you then?
 - d. Did you want to stop working?
 - e. What makes you say you wanted to continue/stop working?
- viii) Has your partner/husband/wife ever worked?
- a. Is he/she still working?
 - b. If YES: what kind of job is it?
 - c. Has she/he changed jobs at all?
 - d. Is there any particular reason for that?
 - e. Does she/he work full-time or part-time?
 - f. Has it always worked full or part-time?
 - g. When did he/she stop working?
 - h. What would you say was the main reason why she/he stopped working?
- ix) I'd like now to ask you about your child or children. How many children do you have?
- a. **If previously mentioned change of partners:** are there any from your former partner?
- x) Is there any of your children living with you at the moment?
- a. **IF YES:** How long has he/she been living with you?
 - i. How old is she/he?
 - b. How would you explain he/she decided to live with you?
- xi) Thinking off all your children. Do they all have a partner and or wife/husband?
- xii) Do they all have children?

- xiii) How would you define the relationship you have with your child(ren)?
 - a. ***In case of multiple children:*** And the relationship among them?
- xiv) How many grandchildren do you have?
 - a. ***In case of multiple children:*** whom children are they?
- xv) What are their names?
 - a. And ages?
- xvi) What age were you when you first become a grandparent?
- xvii) What type of contact do you currently have with **your children**? (either by phone, letter, face-to-face)
- xviii) What type of contact do you currently have with **your grandchildren**? (either by phone, letter, face-to-face)
- xix) How often do you have contact with them?
- xx) Do they all live nearby?
 - a. In geographical proximity by car?
- xxi) What age were you when **Study Child** was born?
- xxii) Is '**Mother of Study Child**' your first, second, third...child? (If paternal grandparents: is the father your first, second, third...child?)

Only thinking about the study child and her/his family

As you are aware, I am interested in your relationship with "***name of mother of study child***" and '***name of study child***'. I would now like to ask you more specific questions about '***Name of study child***' and her/his family.

Relationship with grandchild(ren)

- i) How old is now the ***grandchild***?
- ii) Does ***grandchild*** have any siblings?
 - a. Are they older or younger?
- iii) How is your current relationship with '***grandchild***'?
- iv) What makes you say your relationship with **grandchild** is the way you describe it?
- v) What kind of contact do you have with ***grandchild***?
 - a. How frequent is it?
 - b. Would you like to have more, less or the same contact as now?
 - c. Are there any particular obstacles for that?
 - d. What makes you say that these are obstacles for the relationship with the grandchild?
 - e. What makes you say that?
- vi) How often do you:
 - a. Talk on the phone to study child?
 - b. See face-to-face?
 - c. Have a meal together?
 - d. Go on holidays?
 - e. Child stays overnight?
- vii) Have you always had the same type of contact?

- a. And amount of contact?
- viii) How was the contact with the child in the past?
 - a. When exactly was that (how wold was the child)?
 - b. Do you think it has changed since then?
 - c. In what way would you say it has changed/not changed?
 - d. How did you feel when it changed?
 - e. How would you explain this change?
- ix) How was your relationship with study child when he/she was a toddler?
 - a. Was there any particular reason why the relationship was this way?
 - b. How has your relationship changed from back in the time?
 - c. How does that make you feel?
 - d. Would you like to change anything from the past?
- x) To what extent you can arrange a visit or talk to the child?
 - a. How it is often arranged the contact with Study Child?
 - b. Are these arrangements planned beforehand?
 - c. Who do you talk to for arranging it?
 - d. Does it often work?
 - e. Are there any complications?
 - f. What are the main sources of these complications?

Grandparenting practices

I'd like to ask a few questions about what you do with the '**Grandchild**' (*Exploring the practices grandparents enact and maintain with their grandchildren and what meaning and significance associate with them*)

- i) What do you usually do when you are with the Study Child?
 - a. Which activities do you do with the parents of the child? Alone? With your partner (wife/husband)?
 - b. How often do you do them?
 - c. Are they all regular activities or there are also one-off activities?
 - d. Is it different when you are the two of you alone?
 - i. How different would you say it is?
 - ii. Would you prefer to be alone or with other people when you are with the '**Grandchild**'?
 - iii. How do you feel when you are alone with the Study Child?
 - iv. Do you enjoy spending time alone with the Study Child?
 - v. Are there any activity you prefer to do alone?
 - vi. Are there any activities you prefer to do in company of...?
 - e. What things do you like about these activities?
 - f. What things you don't like about them?
 - g. How important are these activities for...
 - i. you?
 - ii. the family?
 - iii. the child?

- h. To what extent would you say these activities are important for the relationship with the study child?
- i. What is the thing you most enjoy about when you are with the child doing any of these activities?
- j. Why would you say that this is important?
- k. Are there any activities you consider more important than others?
 - i. What makes you say they are/are not?
- ii) What do you most enjoy doing with the **study child**?
 - i. What makes you say that this one is the most enjoyable activity?
 - b. How often do you do this activity with study child?
 - i. Does it involve other people?
 - ii. Do they also enjoy it?
 - iii. What makes you say that?
 - iv. How do you feel if you cannot make this activity together?
 - v. How important is this activity for you and for the relationship with your grandchild?
 - c. How much would say the study child enjoys doing it?
 - i. What makes you say that?
 - d. Have you always done it?
 - i. Was there a different favourite activity in the past?
 - ii. What makes you say that was the most enjoyable activity?
 - iii. What would you say it is the main reason this has changed?
 - iv. How does that make you feel?
 - e. How has it changed over time?
 - f. How would you describe these changes?
 - g. Is there any reason you can think off to explain these changes?
 - h. What makes you say that
- iii) How do you feel about doing these activities?
 - a. What makes you say that?
 - b. Have you always felt in this particular way?
 - c. What did it change to make you feel that way?
 - d. Is there any particular reason you can think off?
- iv) What did or did not change about these activities?
 - a. What would you say are the most important elements that contributed to this/these changes?
 - b. How were there before?
 - i. When exactly was that (how old the child was)?
- v) How important is for you sharing your day to day with the study child?
 - a. What makes you say that this is important/not important?
 - b. Has it always been this way?
 - c. How was in the past?

Reasons for proving childcare

- i) Have you ever provided care for your grandchild?

- ii) What did you have to do?
- iii) When did that happen? How old was the child?
- iv) How often would you look after child?
- v) Was there any particular reason you had to look after?
- vi) How often did you have to look after the Study child?
- vii) Did you have to change anything in your life to look after the Study child?
- viii) Would you do it again?
 - a. What makes you say that?
- ix) Are you still providing care for your grandchild?
- x) How often do you do it?
- xi) How different is it from the past?

IF divorced or separated child

- i) After the divorce, did any of the activities you did with your grandchild change at all?
- ii) How would explain these changes?
- iii) How did divorce/separation of parents affect the relationship with study child?

Closeness towards grandchild

Exploring the meaning and sense of closeness grandparents associate with their relationship with the grandchild and what are the practices conducive to a greater sense of closeness.

Closeness/intimacy: feelings, practices and discourses

- i) Do you often think about study child?
 - a. Is there anything that makes you think more about the study child?
 - b. Do you ever think about 'Study Child's':
 - i. Health
 - ii. School
 - iii. Happiness
 - iv. Relationship with you
 - v. Relationship with the mother/father
 - c. Is there any particular event or occasion that makes you think about the 'Study Child'?
 - d. What makes you say that?
- ii) How well would you say you know the Study Child?
 - a. What are their interests?
 - b. Do you ask about her/his interests?
 - c. Do you enjoy her/his interests?
 - d. What do you do to partake in her/his interests?
 - e. Do you remember any event or experience with study child that exemplifies what you have just told me?
 - f. What does she/he like to talk about?

- g. Are there any topics you refuse to talk with the study child?
 - i. How is so?
 - ii. What do you when he/she asks about it?
- iii) Would you say you are close to the Study Child?
- iv) Do you feel the Study Child feels close to you?
- v) Have you always felt that close to the Study Child?
- vi) Would you say the relationship with the Study Child is special?
- vii) Do you think you have a special bond with the Study Child?
 - a. What makes you say that?
 - b. How would you explain you have this connection with the study child?
 - c. Would you say that it was like this since the early years of the child?
 - d. How do you think is different from other relationships with family members?
- viii) Does your grandchild share problems with you about:
 - a. His/her parents?
 - b. School?
 - c. Friends?
 - d. Fears?
 - e. Discontent with something or someone?
 - f. Other matters?
- ix) Do you share your thoughts/feelings with your grandchild?
 - a. What kind of things you share with her/him?
 - b. What kind of conversation do you have?
 - c. Is this important for you?
 - d. What makes you say that?
 - e. Is there anything you would like to talk about with her/him?
 - f. Is it difficult to share your thoughts with him/her?
- x) What do you do if the child gets hurt playing or at home?
- xi) What do you do if the child is emotionally hurt?
- xii) What do you do when your grandchild asks to do something she/he cannot do?
 - a. Do the parents of the child tell you about things she/he shouldn't do?
 - b. Can you think of any example?
 - c. Do you allow the child to things the parents don't allow?
 - d. Does the child accept that she/he cannot do it?
 - e. How do you make her/him understand that something is wrong or cannot do it?
 - f. Are you concerned the child might get angry?
 - g. What would you do if this happens?
- xiii) Do you ever have an argument with study child?
 - a. What is often the cause of the argument?

- b. How do you usually solve the problem/argument?
- xiv) Is your grandchild a cuddling child?
 - a. Was he/she in the past?
- xv) Do you expect to see your grandchild often?
 - a. What would you say that?
 - b. Does the grandchild ask to see you?
 - c. How do you feel if you don't see or talk with the Study Child for a long period of time?

Grandparenting role and earlier experiences

Exploring the role of grandparents and their motivations and attitudes towards grandparenting.

Identity

- i) What do you think are the responsibilities of a grandparent?
 - a. Are these different than when you were a child?
 - b. What makes you say that have or have not changed over time?
- ii) What were your expectations about being a grandparent?
 - a. How different would you say your experience has been from what you thought?
 - b. What makes you say so?
- iii) How do you feel about grandparenting?
- iv) Would you mind telling me about how involved you wanted to be in your grandchild's life?
 - a. What did you imagine you would be asked to do?
 - b. Where you content with this idea?
 - c. What makes you say that?
- v) Do you feel that you are doing everything you can do as a grandparent?
 - a. How would like to participate in your grandchild's life in a different way?
 - b. What makes you say you would like to participate in this way?
 - c. Is there anything you do different than in the past?
 - i. How would you say that this is different?
 - ii. Is there any reason that you can think that motivated this change?

Attitudes

- vi) What role grandparents should fulfil in the family?
 - a. What makes you think these are the aspects a grandparent should fulfil?
 - b. Do you think are the same for men and women?
 - c. Should there be differences between maternal and paternal grandparents in the participation of grandchild's life?
- vii) (Intergenerational transmission): Do you think the grandparent should teach grandchildren?

- a. What things can a grandparent do differently than parents?
- b. Are there any rules of behaviour
- viii) What should be the relationship with parents of the study child?
- ix) What should be the relationship between grandparents and grandchildren?
- x) To what extent grandparents should participate in the life of grandchildren?
- xi) What are the qualities grandparents can bring to the life of grandchildren?
- xii) What reason would you say that can explain grandparents that have no participation in their grandchild(s) life?

Early experiences

- i) Do you remember your grandparents?
 - a. Maternal?
 - b. Paternal?
- ii) What did you do with your grandparents?
 - a. Were you looked after at any time?
 - b. How did you feel about your relationship with your grandparents?

Relationship with grandchildren's parents

- i) Is ***mother of grandchild*** your daughter or daughter in law?
- ii) How often do you have any contact with the '***Mother grandchild***'?
 - a. How do you usually get in contact?
 - b. Who is normally the person that initiates the contact?
 - c. When was the last time you:
 - i. Talked on the phone with her?
 - ii. Had a face-to-face conversation?
 - iii. Had a meal together?
 - iv. Did any kind of leisure activity?
 - d. How often do you talk on the phone?
 - e. How often do you meet face-to-face?
 - i. What do you think is the main reason for this frequency of contact?
- iii) How would you describe the type of contact with ***mother of grandchild***?
- iv) How would you tell your relationship with the '***Mother of grandchild***'?
 - a. What is it that makes you say that?
- v) Would you say that this relationship has changed over time?
 - a. What makes you think that the relationship has changed or remained the same?
- vi) How satisfied are you with the relationship with mother of study child?
 - a. What makes you say that about this relationship?
 - b. Have you always felt this way?
 - c. What makes you think that the relationship has changed or remained the same?
 - d. How would you define the satisfaction and feeling in the past?
- vii) Is there anything you would like to change about the current relationship with ***Mother grandchild***?

- a. How do you think that would help improve the relationship with mother of study child?
- b. What makes you think that this is important?

About the father of the child, he is your.....

- i) How often do you have any contact with the '***Father of grandchild?***'
 - a. How do you usually get in contact?
 - b. Who is normally the person that initiates the contact?
 - c. When was the last time you:
 - i. Talked on the phone with MSC?
 - ii. Had a face-to-face conversation?
 - iii. Had a meal together?
 - iv. Did any kind of leisure activity?
 - d. How often do you talk on the phone?
 - e. How often do you meet face-to-face?
 - i. What do you think is the main reason for this frequency of contact?
- ii) How would you describe the type of contact with ***father of grandchild?***
- iii) How would you define your relationship with the '***father of grandchild?***'
 - a. What is it that makes you say that?
- iv) Would you say that this relationship has changed over time?
 - a. What makes you think that the relationship has changed or remained the same?
- v) How satisfied are you with the relationship with mother of study child?
 - a. What makes you say that about this relationship?
 - b. Have you always felt this way?
 - c. What makes you think that the relationship has changed or remained the same?
 - d. How would you define the satisfaction and feeling in the past?
- vi) Is there anything you would like to change about the current relationship with ***Father grandchild?***
 - a. How do you think that would help improve the relationship with mother of study child?
 - b. What makes you think that this is important?
- vii) Are parents of study child **separated/divorced?**

IF NO: CONTINUE TO RELATIONSHIP WITH STUDY CHILD

IF YES: READ FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

IF divorced or separated parents of grandchildren

- viii) How did you feel when you knew they were separating/divorcing?
 - a. Why do you think they divorced/separated?

- ix) How would you describe your relationship between divorced/separated parents?
 - a. Mother of the child?
 - b. Father of the child?
- x) What does it make you say the relationship with (Mother/Father) is (good/bad)?
 - a. Has this relationship always been the same?
 - b. What would you say make it change?
 - c. Did you provide any kind of help after divorce?
- xi) Do you know if the parents of study child have any kind of relationship?
 - a. What type of relationship is this?
 - b. Has it been like this since divorce/separation?
 - c. What makes you think that they have this kind of relationship?
 - d. Have you ever talked about this when any of the parents of the study child?
 - e. What made you decide to talk/not talk to them about it?

Relationship with other grandparents of grandchildren

- i) Do you have any contact with other grandparents of the 'grandchildren'?
 - a. How would define the relationship with other grandparents?
 - b. What makes you think you have this kind of relationship with other grandparents?
 - c. Has it always been this kind of relationship?
 - d. What do you think changed/not changed?

EVERYONE

Employment

- i) Are parents of study child currently working?
- ii) Have they always been working?
 - a. IF STOPPED WORKING: what did it happen?
- iii) Did it have any effect on the family?
 - a. How would you describe this impact?

Health

- i) Do you remember any time that mother of study child had any impairing health condition?
 - a. What did you do at the time this happened?
 - b. Was there any extra care you provided to the child?
 - c. What difficulties you experienced during the time that happened?
- ii) Has study child had any health condition?
 - a. Does he/she still have it?
 - b. What kind of health problem is it?
 - c. Did you experience any change in life?
 - i. How would you say it affected your normal day to day?

- ii. How long did it last this arrangement?

General changes

- iii) Thinking about the relationship with parents of 'study child', could remember any event or situation that was of particular significance for the current type of relationship?
 - a. Change of housing?
 - b. Lost job or change job?
 - c. New baby in the relationship?
 - d. New partners (only if not living with father of study child)?
- iv) What makes you say that this/these changes was/were important?
- v) How did it change the relationship?
- vi) How was the relationship in the early years of the child with:
 - a. Mother study child?
 - b. Father study child?
 - c. Study child?

Effect arrival of grandchild on relationship with parents

- vii) Did you imagine that your relationship with parents of your '**Name of Grandchild**' would be the type of relationship with the arrival of your grandchild?
 - a. How would you say that the arrival of the new child had an impact on the relationship with parents of study child?
 - b. Did you expect that would change in that direction?
 - c. What makes you say that impacted on this way?
- viii) Did you have about the same type of relationship before the child was born?
- ix) How would you say that the birth of study child changed the relationship with:
 - a. Mother?
 - b. Father?
 - c. Other grandparents?
 - d. Other grandchildren, if any?

Appendix G

Equation 1a to 1d: Child's mother's reported emotional closeness with different types of grandparents, modelled on structure of family needs and opportunities and contact and proximity of other family lineage

Equation 2a: Maternal grandmothers

$$\text{Logit (GCLSMM)} = \alpha + \beta_1(\text{AGEMO}) + \beta_2(\text{EMPLOY}) + \beta_3(\text{EDUC}) + \beta_4(\text{SIBLNG}) + \beta_5(\text{INCOME}) + \beta_6(\text{McGage01}) + \beta_7(\text{CONMM}) + \beta_8(\text{PROXMM}) + \beta_9(\text{CONPT}) + \beta_{10}(\text{PROXPM}) + \beta_{11}(\text{PROXPF}) + \varepsilon$$

Equation 2b: Maternal grandfather

$$\text{Logit (GCLSMF)} = \alpha + \beta_1(\text{AGEMO}) + \beta_2(\text{EMPLOY}) + \beta_3(\text{EDUC}) + \beta_4(\text{SIBLNG}) + \beta_5(\text{INCOME}) + \beta_6(\text{McGage02}) + \beta_7(\text{CONMF}) + \beta_8(\text{PROXMF}) + \beta_9(\text{CONPT}) + \beta_{10}(\text{PROXPM}) + \beta_{11}(\text{PROXPF}) + \beta_{12}(\text{CONMF*PROXMM}) + \varepsilon$$

Equation 2c: Paternal grandmother

$$\text{Logit (GCLSPM)} = \alpha + \beta_1(\text{AGEMO}) + \beta_2(\text{EMPLOY}) + \beta_3(\text{EDUC}) + \beta_4(\text{SIBLNG}) + \beta_5(\text{INCOME}) + \beta_6(\text{McGage05}) + \beta_7(\text{CONPM}) + \beta_8(\text{PROXPM}) + \beta_9(\text{CONMT}) + \beta_{10}(\text{PROXMM}) + \beta_{11}(\text{PROXMF}) + \beta_{12}(\text{CONPM2007*CONMT}) + \beta_{13}(\text{PROXMM*PROXMF}) + \varepsilon$$

Equation 2d: Paternal grandfather

$$\text{Logit (GCLSPF)} = \alpha + \beta_1(\text{AGEMO}) + \beta_2(\text{EMPLOY}) + \beta_3(\text{EDUC}) + \beta_4(\text{SIBLNG}) + \beta_5(\text{INCOME}) + \beta_6(\text{McGage06}) + \beta_7(\text{CONPF}) + \beta_8(\text{PROXPF}) + \beta_9(\text{CONMT}) + \beta_{10}(\text{PROXMM}) + \beta_{11}(\text{PROXMF}) + \beta_{12}(\text{PROXMM*PROXMF}) + \varepsilon$$

These equations include the same variables as described in the previous equations (1a to 1d) with the exception of:

GCLS**⁷: Sweep3 – Whether child has an emotionally close relationship with the maternal grandmother (MM), maternal grandfather (MF), paternal grandmother (PM), paternal grandfather (PF)

SEX: Sex of the study child

⁷ ** variable specific to that one of the 4 grandparents (maternal grandmother, maternal grandfather, paternal grandmother, paternal grandfather}, who is the focus of this grandparent analysis.

AGEMO:	Sweep3 – Age of the mother at child’s birth
EMPLOY:	Sweep3 – Employment status of the child’s mother
EDUC:	Sweep3 – Mother’s highest academic qualification achieved
SIBLNG:	Sweep3 – Number of siblings in the household
INCOME:	Sweep3 – Banded equivalised household income
McGage**:	Sweep3 – Age of the maternal grandmother (01), maternal grandfather (02), paternal grandmother (05), paternal grandfather (06)
CON**:	Sweep3 – Whether the child has face-to-face contact with the maternal grandmother (MM), maternal grandfather (MF), paternal grandmother (PM), paternal grandfather (PF)
PROX**:	Sweep3 – Whether the maternal grandmother (MM), maternal grandfather (MF), paternal grandmother (PM), paternal grandfather (PF) lives in close proximity with the child
ε – Error term	

APPENDIX G

Equation 1a to 3d: Child's mother's reported emotional closeness with different types of grandparents, modelled on parents' divorce/separation

3a. Maternal grandmother

$$\text{Logit (GCLSM)} = \alpha + \beta_1(\text{AGEMO}) + \beta_2(\text{EMPLOY}) + \beta_3(\text{EDUC}) + \beta_4(\text{SIBLNG}) + \beta_5(\text{INCOME}) + \beta_6(\text{McGage01}) + \beta_7(\text{CONMM}) + \beta_8(\text{PROXMM}) + \beta_9(\text{DIVOR}) + \varepsilon$$

Equation 3b: Maternal grandfather

$$\text{Logit (GCLSMF)} = \alpha + \beta_1(\text{AGEMO}) + \beta_2(\text{EMPLOY}) + \beta_3(\text{EDUC}) + \beta_4(\text{SIBLNG}) + \beta_5(\text{INCOME}) + \beta_6(\text{McGage02}) + \beta_7(\text{CONMF}) + \beta_8(\text{PROXMF}) + \beta_9(\text{DIVOR}) + \beta_{10}(\text{CONMF*PROXMF}) + \varepsilon$$

Equation 3c: Paternal grandmother

$$\text{Logit (GCLSPM)} = \alpha + \beta_1(\text{AGEMO}) + \beta_2(\text{EMPLOY}) + \beta_3(\text{EDUC}) + \beta_4(\text{SIBLNG}) + \beta_5(\text{INCOME}) + \beta_6(\text{McGage05}) + \beta_7(\text{CONPM}) + \beta_8(\text{PROXPM}) + \beta_9(\text{DIVOR}) + \varepsilon$$

Equation 3d: Paternal grandfather

$$\text{Logit (GCLSPF)} = \alpha + \beta_1(\text{AGEMO}) + \beta_2(\text{EMPLOY}) + \beta_3(\text{EDUC}) + \beta_4(\text{SIBLNG}) + \beta_5(\text{INCOME}) + \beta_6(\text{McGage06}) + \beta_7(\text{CONPF}) + \beta_8(\text{PROXPF}) + \beta_9(\text{DIVOR}) + \varepsilon$$

GCLS** ⁸ :	Sweep3 – Whether child has an emotionally close relationship with the maternal grandmother (MM), maternal grandfather (MF), paternal grandmother (PM), paternal grandfather (PF)
AGEMO:	Sweep3 – Age of the mother at child's birth
EMPLOY:	Sweep3 – Employment status of the child's mother
EDUC: achieved	Sweep3 – Mother's highest academic qualification achieved
SIBLNG:	Sweep3 – Number of siblings in the household
INCOME:	Sweep3 – Banded equivalised household income

⁸ ** variable specific to that one of the 4 grandparents (maternal grandmother, maternal grandfather, paternal grandmother, paternal grandfather}, who is the focus of this grandparent analysis.

McGage**:	Sweep3 – Age of the maternal grandmother (01), maternal grandfather (02), paternal grandmother (05), paternal grandfather (06)
CON**:	Sweep3 – Whether the mother of the child has any kind of contact with the maternal grandmother (MM), maternal grandfather (MF), paternal grandmother (PM), paternal grandfather (PF)
PROX**:	Sweep3 – Whether the maternal grandmother (MM), maternal grandfather (MF), paternal grandmother (PM), paternal grandfather (PF) lives in close proximity with the child
DIVOR:	Sweep 3 – Whether the grandchild's mother is divorced or separated.
ε:	Error term

Equation 2a to 4d: Child's mother's reported emotional closeness with different types of grandparents, modelled on grandparents' divorce

Equation 4a: Maternal grandmother

$$\text{Logit } (GCLSM) = \alpha + \beta_1(AGEMO) + \beta_2(EMPLOY) + \beta_3(EDUC) + \beta_4(SIBLNG) + \beta_5(INCOME) + \beta_6(McGage01) + \beta_7(CONMM) + \beta_8(PROXMM) + \beta_9(GPDIVMT2007) + \beta_{10}(GPDIVMT2007*CONMM2007) + \varepsilon$$

Equation 4b: Maternal grandfather

$$\text{Logit } (GCLSMF) = \alpha + \beta_1(AGEMO) + \beta_2(EMPLOY) + \beta_3(EDUC) + \beta_4(SIBLNG) + \beta_5(INCOME) + \beta_6(McGage02) + \beta_7(CONMF) + \beta_8(PROXMF) + \beta_9(GPDIVMT) + \beta_{10}(GPDIVMT2007*CONMF2007) + \varepsilon$$

Equation 4c: Paternal grandmother

$$\text{Logit } (GCLSPM) = \alpha + \beta_1(AGEMO) + \beta_2(EMPLOY) + \beta_3(EDUC) + \beta_4(SIBLNG) + \beta_5(INCOME) + \beta_6(McGage05) + \beta_7(CONPM) + \beta_8(PROXPM) + \beta_9(GPDIVPT) + \beta_{10}(GPDIVPT*CONPM) + \varepsilon$$

Equation 4d: Paternal grandfather

$$\text{Logit}(GCLSPF) = \alpha + \beta_1(AGEMO) + \beta_2(EMPLOY) + \beta_3(EDUC) + \beta_4(SIBLNG) + \beta_5(INCOME) + \beta_6(McGage06) + \beta_7(CONPF) + \beta_8(PROXPF) + \beta_9(GPDIVPT) + \beta_{10}(GPDIVPT*CONPF) + \beta_{11}(GPDIVPT*PROXPF) + \varepsilon$$

These equations include the same variables as described in the equations 5a to 8a, excluding the indicator ‘parental divorce, but include the following indicators:

GPDIV**:	Sweep 3 – Whether maternal (MT) or paternal (PT) grandparents are divorced
GPDIVMT2007*CONMM2007:	Statistically significant interaction between maternal grandparents’ divorce and any kind of contact mother and maternal grandmother
GPDIVMT2007*CONMF2007:	Statistically significant interaction between maternal grandparents’ divorce and any kind of contact mother and maternal grandfather
GPDIVPT*CONPM:	Statistically significant interaction between paternal grandparents’ divorce and contact mother and paternal grandmother
GPDIVPT*CONPF:	Statistically significant interaction between paternal grandparents’ divorce and contact mother and paternal grandfather
GPDIVPT*PROXPF:	Statistically significant interaction between paternal grandparents’ divorce and geographical proximity with paternal grandfather

Equation 3a to 5d: Child’s mother’s reported emotional closeness with different types of grandparents, modelled on maternal and grandparental divorce

Equation 5a: Maternal grandmother

$$\text{Logit}(GCLSM) = \alpha + \beta_1(AGEMO) + \beta_2(EMPLOY) + \beta_3(EDUC) + \beta_4(SIBLNG) + \beta_5(INCOME) + \beta_6(McGage01) + \beta_7(CONMM) + \beta_8(PROXMM) + \beta_9(DIVOR) + \beta_{10}(GPDMT2007) + \beta_{11}(GPDMT2007*CONMM2007) + \varepsilon$$

Equation 5b: Maternal grandfather

$$\text{Logit (GCLSMF)} = \alpha + \beta_1(\text{AGEMO}) + \beta_2(\text{EMPLOY}) + \beta_3(\text{EDUC}) + \beta_4(\text{SIBLNG}) + \beta_5(\text{INCOME}) + \beta_6(\text{McGage02}) + \beta_7(\text{CONMF}) + \beta_8(\text{PROXMF}) + \beta_9(\text{DIVOR}) + \beta_{10}(\text{GPDIVMT}) + \beta_{11}(\text{GPDIVMT2007*CONMF2007}) + \varepsilon$$

Equation 5c: Paternal grandmother

$$\text{Logit (GCLSPM)} = \alpha + \beta_1(\text{AGEMO}) + \beta_2(\text{EMPLOY}) + \beta_3(\text{EDUC}) + \beta_4(\text{SIBLNG}) + \beta_5(\text{INCOME}) + \beta_6(\text{McGage05}) + \beta_7(\text{CONPM}) + \beta_8(\text{PROXPM}) + \beta_9(\text{DIVOR}) + \beta_{10}(\text{GPDIVPT}) + \varepsilon$$

Equation 5d: Paternal grandfather

$$\text{Logit (GCLSPF)} = \alpha + \beta_1(\text{AGEMO}) + \beta_2(\text{EMPLOY}) + \beta_3(\text{EDUC}) + \beta_4(\text{SIBLNG}) + \beta_5(\text{INCOME}) + \beta_6(\text{McGage06}) + \beta_7(\text{CONPF}) + \beta_8(\text{PROXPF}) + \beta_9(\text{DIVOR}) + \beta_{10}(\text{GPDIVPT}) + \beta_{11}(\text{GPDIVPT*CONPF}) + \beta_{12}(\text{GPDIVPT*PROXPF}) + \varepsilon$$

These equations include the same variables as described in the equation 5a and 5b, but also include the following indicators:

GPDI VMT2007*CONMM2007:	Statistically significant interaction between maternal grandparents' divorce and any kind of contact mother and maternal grandmother
GPDI VMT2007*CONMF2007:	Statistically interaction effect between maternal grandparents' divorce and any kind of contact between the mother and the maternal grandfather
GPDI VPT*CONPM:	Statistically significant interaction between paternal grandparents' divorce and contact mother and paternal grandmother
GPDI VPT*CONPF:	Statistically significant interaction between paternal grandparents' divorce and contact mother and paternal grandfather
GPDI VPT*CONPM:	Statistically significant interaction between paternal grandparents' divorce and geographical proximity with paternal grandfather

Appendix H

Equation 4a to 6d: Child's mother's reported emotional closeness with different types of grandparents, modelled on frequency of activities of daily living

Equation 6a: Maternal grandmother

$$\text{Logit (GCLSMM)} = \alpha + \beta_1(\text{AGEMO}) + \beta_2(\text{EMPLOY}) + \beta_3(\text{EDUC}) + \beta_4(\text{SIBLNG}) + \beta_5(\text{INCOME}) + \beta_6(\text{McGage01}) + \beta_7(\text{PROXMM}) + \beta_8(\text{LOOKMM}) + \beta_9(\text{BSTMM}) + \beta_{10}(\text{STAYMM}) + \beta_{11}(\text{OUTMM}) + \varepsilon$$

Equation 6b: Maternal grandfather

$$\text{Logit (GCLSMF)} = \alpha + \beta_1(\text{AGEMO}) + \beta_2(\text{EMPLOY}) + \beta_3(\text{EDUC}) + \beta_4(\text{SIBLNG}) + \beta_5(\text{INCOME}) + \beta_6(\text{McGage02}) + \beta_7(\text{PROXMF}) + \beta_8(\text{LOOKMF}) + \beta_9(\text{BSTMF}) + \beta_{10}(\text{STAYMF}) + \beta_{11}(\text{OUTMF}) + \varepsilon$$

Equation 6c: Paternal grandmother

$$\text{Logit (GCLSPM)} = \alpha + \beta_1(\text{AGEMO}) + \beta_2(\text{EMPLOY}) + \beta_3(\text{EDUC}) + \beta_4(\text{SIBLNG}) + \beta_5(\text{INCOME}) + \beta_6(\text{McGage05}) + \beta_7(\text{PROXPM}) + \beta_8(\text{LOOKPM}) + \beta_9(\text{BSTPM}) + \beta_{10}(\text{STAYPM}) + \beta_{11}(\text{OUTPM}) + \varepsilon$$

Equation 6d: Paternal grandfather

$$\text{Logit (GCLSPF)} = \alpha + \beta_1(\text{AGEMO}) + \beta_2(\text{EMPLOY}) + \beta_3(\text{EDUC}) + \beta_4(\text{SIBLNG}) + \beta_5(\text{INCOME}) + \beta_6(\text{McGage06}) + \beta_7(\text{PROXPF}) + \beta_8(\text{LOOKPF}) + \beta_9(\text{BSTPF}) + \beta_{10}(\text{STAYPF}) + \beta_{11}(\text{OUTPF}) + \varepsilon$$

GCLS** ⁹ :	Sweep3 – Whether child has an emotionally close relationship with the maternal grandmother (MM), maternal grandfather (MF), paternal grandmother (PM), paternal grandfather (PF)
AGEMO:	Sweep3 – Age of the mother at child's birth
EMPLOY:	Sweep3 – Employment status of the child's mother
EDUC: achieved	Sweep3 – Mother's highest academic qualification achieved

⁹ ** variable specific to that one of the 4 grandparents (maternal grandmother, maternal grandfather, paternal grandmother, paternal grandfather}, who is the focus of this grandparent analysis.

SIBLNG:	Sweep3 – Number of siblings in the household
INCOME:	Sweep3 – Banded equivalised household income
McGage**:	Sweep3 – Age of the maternal grandmother (01), maternal grandfather (02), paternal grandmother (05), paternal grandfather (06)
PROX**:	Sweep3 – Whether the maternal grandmother (MM), maternal grandfather (MF), paternal grandmother (PM), paternal grandfather (PF) lives in close proximity with the child
LOOK**:	Sweep3 – Frequency the grandparent looks after the grandchild (derived; three categories: frequently, rarely and never): maternal grandmother (MM), maternal grandfather (MF), paternal grandmother (PM), paternal grandfather (PF)
BST**:	Sweep3 – Frequency the grandparent babysits the grandchild (derived; three categories: frequently, rarely and never): maternal grandmother (MM), maternal grandfather (MF), paternal grandmother (PM), paternal grandfather (PF)
STAY**:	Sweep3 – Frequency the grandchild stays over with the grandparent (derived; three categories: frequently, rarely and never): maternal grandmother (MM), maternal grandfather (MF), paternal grandmother (PM), paternal grandfather (PF)
OUT**:	Sweep3 – Frequency the grandparent goes on outings with the grandchild (derived; three categories: frequently, rarely and never): maternal grandmother (MM), maternal grandfather (MF), paternal grandmother (PM), paternal grandfather (PF)
ε:	Error term

Equation 5 to 7d: Child’s mother’s reported emotional closeness with different types of grandparents, modelled on frequency of activities of daily living, and parent or grandparent divorce/separation

Equation 7a: Maternal grandmother

$$\text{Logit } (GCLSMM) = \alpha + \beta_1(AGEMO) + \beta_2(EMPLOY) + \beta_3(EDUC) + \beta_4(SIBLNG) + \beta_5(INCOME) + \beta_6(McGage01) + \beta_7(PROXMM) + \beta_8(LOOKMM) +$$

$$\beta_9(BSTMM) + \beta_{10}(STAYMM) + \beta_{11}(OUTMM) + \beta_{11}(DIVOR) + \beta_{11}(GPDIVMT) + \varepsilon$$

Equation 7b: Maternal grandfather

$$\text{Logit } (GCLSMF) = \alpha + \beta_1(AGEMO) + \beta_2(EMPLOY) + \beta_3(EDUC) + \beta_4(SIBLNG) + \beta_5(INCOME) + \beta_6(McGage02) + \beta_7(PROXMF) + \beta_8(LOOKMF) + \beta_9(BSTMF) + \beta_{10}(STAYMF) + \beta_{11}(OUTMF) + \beta_{11}(DIVOR) + \beta_{11}(GPDIVMT) + \varepsilon$$

Equation 7c: Paternal grandmother

$$\text{Logit } (GCLSPM) = \alpha + \beta_1(AGEMO) + \beta_2(EMPLOY) + \beta_3(EDUC) + \beta_4(SIBLNG) + \beta_5(INCOME) + \beta_6(McGage05) + \beta_7(PROXPM) + \beta_8(LOOKPM) + \beta_9(BSTPM) + \beta_{10}(STAYPM) + \beta_{11}(OUTPM) + \beta_{11}(DIVOR) + \beta_{11}(GPDIVPT) + \varepsilon$$

Equation 7d: Paternal grandfather

$$\text{Logit } (GCLSPF) = \alpha + \beta_1(AGEMO) + \beta_2(EMPLOY) + \beta_3(EDUC) + \beta_4(SIBLNG) + \beta_5(INCOME) + \beta_6(McGage06) + \beta_7(PROXPF) + \beta_8(LOOKPF) + \beta_9(BSTPF) + \beta_{10}(STAYPF) + \beta_{11}(OUTPF) + \beta_{11}(DIVOR) + \beta_{11}(GPDIVPT) + \varepsilon$$

These equations include the same variables as described in the equations 6a to 6d, but include the following indicators:

DIVOR:	Sweep 3 – Whether the grandchild’s mother is divorced or separated.
GPDIV** ¹⁰ :	Sweep 3 – Whether maternal (MT) or paternal (PT) grandparents are divorced

¹⁰ ** variable specific to that one of the 4 grandparents (maternal grandmother, maternal grandfather, paternal grandmother, paternal grandfather, who is the focus of this grandparent analysis